Phenomenal Mutiny by BCI603

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Summary: This picks up right where we left off in Eloquent Abilities. Follow Mike on his three year journey with Kail, without his friends and family, as he discovers more about his abilities and meets other experiments in the bunker. He's right to be paranoid, it isn't over until all the 'bad men' are gone. That includes the one and only Martin Brenner and The Projects.

1. Chapter 1

A few things; Phieilly came up with the title, so thank you! I will not be making promises as to when I update, because it's taken forever just to write chapter one XD. I'm not winging it as much this time around as I did in EA, I've got a good bit of stuff planned out, as well as a few future scenes and/or chapters written already.

I've also decided, once and for all, the numbers of everyone. All of those that had a B in front of the number will just be numbers after 12 because it's a lot easier that way XD. Anyways, here's the list of characters and their ages, heights, and powers (some have been altered to go along with the story line :D).

P.S. Their abilities will be told as we get to know them :)

001- John, 22 years old, male

002- Nora, 18 years old, female

003- Polly, 18 years old, female

004- Brittany, 25 years old, female

005- Mackenzie (Mack), 14 years old, female

006- Shawn, 20 years old, male

007- CeCe, 14 years old, female

008- Kali, 19 years old, female

009- Axel, 15 years old, male

010- Andi, 15 years old, female

013- Tannern, 15 years old, male

014- Catherine, 14 years old, female

015- Ender, 16, female

I hope you all like the first chapter!

Wednesday, March 12, 1986

Mike was silent as he walked between Kali and Shawn, vaguely aware of the argument taking place behind them between Mack and Axel.

Do they ever shut up? He thought.

"Do they ever shut up?" He asked quietly. Shawn snorted and Kali chuckled.

"Rarely, no. Axel's only quiet when he sleeps."

"Psh, no he's not, he snores." Mack called.

"You sound like a dying pig in your sleep, shut the hell up." Axel shoved her.

"I will freeze you again, don't mess with me." She glared at him. He rolled his eyes but continued walking.

"Hey Mike?" He asked.

"Hm?"

"If she freezes me will you unfreeze me?" Mike just shrugged. "I'll take that as a yes."

"Are we walking all the way to Chicago or what?" Mike asked, ten minutes later. He kept his mind blank, trying not to think about his, most likely, crying girlfriend and family.

"No, we've got a van out on an old back road." Kali told him. He nodded.

"Thank God we do, because I wouldn't be able to handle Axel whining anymore." Shawn muttered.

"You've dealt with me all year, you can deal with me longer." Mike sighed, rolling his eyes.

"Don't worry, you'll get used to it and be able to block him out in no time." Kali told him. He just nodded again.

"Hey kid, do you ever smile?" Mack asked.

"I'm older than you."

"*I don't care*."

"I used to." He said, finally. She stayed quiet after that, and so did Axel. The only sound they heard were the leaves and twigs snapping under their feet. When they got to the van, Kali said,

"Axel, you sit in the front with Shawn." Axel grumbled but did as he was told, hopping in the passenger seat as Kali, Mike, and Mack got in the back. It didn't have seats, but it did have a mountain of blankets and pillows for them to sit on. Mike settled in the corner, sitting his bag next to him while the other two got settled as Shawn drove off.

"Why are there so many blankets?" He asked curiously, playing with a loose string.

"In case we all have to leave." Kali told him. "It's to be comfortable, for one, and it's for when it's cold. The van doesn't have the best heat."

"All of you?" He raised an eyebrow.

"We have two vans." She told him. "Each can hold seven, two in the front, five in the back." Mike nodded.

"Can I see your powers?" Mack asked him. His eyebrows furrowed, looking at Kali as if to ask for permission. She shrugged. He held his left hand up and a small flame fluttered in his palm. "That's so cool." She whispered, unable to take her eyes off the fire until he closed his hand, putting it out.

"Opposite of cool, actually. Literally and figuratively." He mumbled

and she snorted.

"I know you feel terrible, Mike, but this is for the best." Kali told him.

"I know… I just, I don't want anything to happen to them, and I know it'll keep them safe, and that I can leave when it's safe, but how will I know when it's safe? If you're right, there are labs and the Projects all over the place. It could be years before we even *think* it's safe. It'll probably *never* be safe." He groaned, running a hand through his hair as he glared at his shoes.

"We know a lot more than you think, kid." Shawn told him, looking at him in the mirror. "You're right, it could be years, but one day, it *will* be safe, I can promise you that." Mike stared at him. "I know how much promises mean to you, and I assure you, they mean just as much to me as they do to you. I promise it, Mike, it will be safe one day." Mike eyed him for a couple more seconds before nodding, turning his attention back to the string he'd been playing with.

There's something they're not telling him, he could tell that much. They had to be up to something, considering it would never be safe when labs are involved. He wondered if they had a plan to take them down, if the only reason they wanted him to come with him was to use him as bait. He sighed quietly, shaking it off. Kali wouldn't do that, would she?

She may have broken one promise already, but that doesn't mean she'll break any others. You have to trust her, Mike. Do it for the people you love. He thought to himself. He couldn't help but feel paranoid after all that's happened, and if he asked any one of his soon to be friends, they'd tell him they felt the same way. The paranoia never goes away, no matter how safe you are.

"Why don't you try to sleep, Mike? It's a two hour ride." Kali told him. He bit his lip, and didn't respond. He just curled up into a ball, hugging his knees. He didn't think he'd fall asleep, thoughts racing through his mind, but he did. He fell into a, thankfully, dreamless sleep.

"Do you think he'll freak out?" Andi asked, twirling her hand around,

creating a tiny tornado on top of her thigh.

"Who?" John asked. "Mike or Axel?" She thought for a second.

"Both?" He chuckled and shook his head, shrugging.

"I have no idea." Catherine told her from her spot on the couch.

"Mack will keep Axel straight, so he probably won't freak out too much. You know since Shawn can sense feelings, he'll be able to calm Mike down." Brittany said, running her fingers through her hair.

"How much you wanna bet Mack told Mike that she was his mortal enemy?" Polly asked, propping her feet up on the table.

"You know full well she did." Andi replied, throwing the tornado Brittany's way, causing her hair to tangle. Brittany scowled at her and got up to fix her hair, muttering under her breath. Andi snickered.

"Do you think he's cute?" Ender asked.

"Jesus Christ, is that all you think about?" John asked, raising an eyebrow at her.

"It doesn't matter anyway, he's taken Ender." CeCe called.

"How do you know?" Ender called back, rolling her eyes.

"Uh, because I pay attention? If you listened to Kali when she told us who he was and his backstory, you would understand that he's got a girlfriend."

"Huh, pitty. And yes, Johnny, that is all I think about. I am a sixteen year old girl who is stuck in an underground bunker, with only books and stupid fashion magazines." John rolled his eyes, sighing and getting up, joining Tannern in their room. The bunker could hold a shit ton of people and they could all have their own room, but everyone preferred to share with someone. Well, everyone except for Shawn, who would rather have his own room, even though it was directly next to Kali's and they ended up sleeping in the same bed anyways.

"CeCe, Andi, let's go out and train." Brittany told them, walking back into the kitchen, her hair now in a ponytail. The two girls groaned but did as they were told, following her up the stairs.

"Just imagine how bad it would be if everything was normal. You know, if they were in high school." Polly said, looking at Ender, who snorted.

"I'd be in high school too, you know. I'd probably be some snarky bitch like in those magazines and books."

"You got that right." Nora muttered, walking in and plopping down in a chair.

"Like you wouldn't be one too. We'd probably be in a group together or something." Ender said, flicking her shoulder.

"Maybe Mike could tell us about school?" Catherine said, turning and facing the three girls from the living room. (The kitchen and living room only have a giant doorway separating them, so it was basically just one big room.)

"He went to school?" Tannern asked quietly, confused, as he and John came back in the living room.

"Dude, did you not pay attention either?" John asked, rolling his eyes. Tannern just shrugged.

"Mike's powers didn't show up until he was fifteen."

"Yeah, his birthday was the day before Christmas Eve." Polly added. "Kali said she started training him *on* Christmas Eve."

"Huh, it must suck to have a birthday so close to Christmas." Ender mumbled. John turned his attention back to Catherine.

"I'm sure that once he warms up to us, you could ask him and he might tell you all about it."

"Speaking of him warming up to us, are we positive that he won't like, go all apeshit on us and explode the entire bunker?" Nora asked.

"I highly doubt he would, Nora." Polly rolled her eyes. "Even if he wanted to, we could probably stop him."

"How could we stop him? He's practically invincible." Ender retorted.

"Uh, no, he's not." John rolled his eyes. "He's only *invincible* from his own powers, as in, he doesn't get burned by fire, or anything heat related I don't think."

"Oh."

"Yeah, you should start paying attention more."

Outside, CeCe, Andi, and Brittany were messing around with their powers, CeCe just flying around or appearing in random places, while Andi just created small clouds and made thunderstorms.

"I'm gonna make an earth shield, Andi, and I want to see if you can destroy it with lightning." Brittany told her. Andi raised an eyebrow.

"Are you sure?" She asked. Brittany nodded. She raised her hands, lifting the earth up as she raised her arms until she was completely hidden. Andi looked at CeCe.

"Be ready to get her out of the way in case it ends badly, okay?" CeCe nodded and joined Brittany behind the shield. Andi faced it and wiggled her fingers, feeling the electricity in them. She raised her hands and lightning shot out at the shield. It hit with a loud boom and dirt went flying. It didn't destroy the shield, but it did catch on fire and quickly spread.

"Oh shit, oh shit!" Andi exclaimed, immediately creating a rain cloud and making it pour. "I knew this was a bad idea!"

"Hey, they're back!" CeCe straight up ignored the fire when she saw Kali and the others walking towards them. Kali's eyes widened and looked at Mike.

"Mike, put it-" She didn't even need to continue, as he'd waved his arm and the fire was gone.

"How in the…." Andi raised an eyebrow, confused. Brittany dropped

the shield, wiping her nose. "Are you okay?" Andi asked. She nodded.

"Yeah, you?" Andi nodded.

"That was so freaking cool!" Axel exclaimed, jumping up and down like a child. Mike shrugged and wiped his nose with his sleeve.

"I thought you could only get rid of fire that you created?" Mack asked, confused. He shook his head.

"It doesn't matter where it comes from, I can put it out just like that."

"Do you know that you just saved our asses, dude?" Andi asked. "Like I didn't know that lightning hitting dry dirt like that would almost cause a fucking forest fire." He just shrugged again.

"Come on, I think we've had enough training, even though it didn't last too long."

"Yeah, I want Mike to meet everyone before we get dinner started." Shawn told them, walking forward and leaning down, opening the door.

"Just wait, they won't be afraid of Mike anymore when I tell them he saved us." Andi said, grinning as she slid down the ladder, running off as soon as her feet hit the floor. Brittany and CeCe both gave Mike a smile. Mack and Axel went on down and Kali motioned for Mike to follow, but he hesitated.

"They're all scared of me?" He asked softly, adjusting his bag on his back.

"Not necessarily no, they were just a bit freaked out by it. Majority of them down there are dramatic teenage girls, so they think everything is worse than it is." Shawn told him. He nodded and made his way down the ladder.

Goddammit, I hate ladders.

He eyed the long hallway as Kali and Shawn made their way down the ladder.

"We've got a long walk ahead of us still, kid, you want me to take your bag for you?" Mike shrugged again, he'd become even more quiet since he woke up from his nap. Shawn sighed and gently took the bag from Mike and threw it over his shoulders, walking ahead of them. Mike and Kali walked side by side, footsteps echoing around the hall.

"There's a lot of stairs to go down." Kali warned him. He nodded.

By the time they made it to the bottom, Mike felt even shittier. On top of everything else, he feels like his legs are made of noodles thanks to the stairs and he's sweaty.

"I should have done more in gym." He mumbled and Shawn snorted.

"I agree, kid, I probably wouldn't have done anything though. You're the only one who's gone to school out of all of us." Mike raised an eyebrow and Shawn nodded. "Yep, so once you guys are all warmed up to one another, they might ask you questions about it." Mike nodded.

"It's not as great as you guys probably think." He muttered. Shawn opened the door and immediately, multiple voices carried through, Axel and Andi talking animatedly and explaining to everyone who would listen, which was literally everyone.

"It was cool! Fucking badass!" Andi exclaimed. "He was just like, "She waved her arm the same way Mike did, "Whoosh! The fire was *gone*."

"Is that true?" Ender asked upon seeing Shawn and Kali. The two nodded, grins forming on their faces.

"We walked up on them right on time to see Britt's shield go up in flames." Kali crossed her arms and gave Andi a pointed look.

"Hey, Brittany suggested it." She said, raising her hands in surrender. Kali turned the look to Brittany, who pretended she didn't hear anything.

"Hi, I'm CeCe!" She said excitedly, bouncing up and down on the balls of her feet in front of Mike. She held out a hand to shake.

"Um...Mike." Mike hesitated, then shook her hand.

"I know. You're cool."

"Actually, he's the *opposite* of cool." Mack joked, nudging Mike and trying to get a laugh or smile out of him. It didn't work. He felt himself kind of shrinking as every set of eyes turned to look at him.

"Guys, you're freaking him out. Don't just stare at him like he's a wild animal." Catherine said, rolling her eyes and walking forward. "I'm Catherine, and my abilities are healing and ability amplifier. I'm fourteen."

"I, uh…" He coughed a little and continued, voice shaky. "I'm assuming you all know what mine are?" They all nodded in unison.

That's creepy as fuck.

"He's actually got a third ability." Axel said. "Teleportation."

"How in the fuck?" CeCe muttered. "How does that work?"

"Just like some of us have two abilities, while he's got three. Duh." Axel rolled his eyes and she flipped him off.

"He didn't know about the teleportation." Kali explained. "None of us knew, actually, until Axel saw it." Mike nodded in agreement.

"We could help you out with it." CeCe said. "Polly, Ender and I have teleportation too. I can fly and Ender has telepathy." Mike swallowed and nodded.

"That makes four with teleportation. This'll be easy." John muttered. Kali nudged him and gave him a look that clearly said, *shut up!*

"Um…" Mike bit his lip. "I'm not gonna like, blow up the bunker or anything." He told them. "You don't have to act like you're gonna attack me any second any more." They looked away from him and at each other instead.

"Sorry." A few muttered.

"Brittany, did you get his room ready?" Shawn asked. Brittany nodded.

"Yeah, he's gonna be sharing with Axel."

You've gotta be kidding me.

Ender snorted loudly and everyone looked at her weird. She waved them off, eyeing Mike and giggling to herself.

Right, telepathy. I'm assuming you heard that?

Damn right I did. He's not that bad once you get used to it.

He's like my friend Dustin but twenty times more energetic.

Ender snorted again but covered it with a cough.

"Is she talking to you?" Andi asked. Mike looked at her and discovered her resemblance to Max. Well, the only resemblance was the fact that she had fiery red hair like her.

Say no.

He shook his head a little and shrugged. "No."

2. Chapter 2

Heyo! To the characters who aren't completely finished growing, I need ya help! If you would, could you let me know how tall your character will end up being as an adult? For future references :)

In the next chapter the rest of the characters and backgrounds will be revealed ;) and Mike gets into a routine of sorts.

It'll also hopefully not take as long as this chapter so sorry about that XD

Like I said last chapter, I tweaked and/or slightly changed some of you guys abilities, but only so I could match it up with the story line because these abilities are important for the future of this story :) :)

I also hope you guys like the backstories! If they're terrible or completely wrong just PM me and I'll fix it!

"Axel, show Mike to your room and help him settle down, and in an hour we'll have a meeting, you know, so Mike can get to know everyone, and then dinner." Shawn told him. Axel nodded and grinned at Mike, motioning for him to follow. Shawn handed him his bag and he looked down at his feet as he followed Axel down the hall.

"It's not much but I'm pretty sure it's better than the cell you were in." He babbled, opening the door and walking in.

"Did he really just fucking say that?" Mike heard Kali say, and smirked. It didn't really bother him, at least Axel would, hopefully, be a good distraction for a while.

He followed him in the room, instantly noticing that there were double beds on either side of the room, one made up, the other utterly destroyed, the blanket on the floor, a pillow at the foot of the bed, and a pile of clothes on top. "Yeah, ignore that. I have to do

laundry." He waved at the bed and turned to him. "Ender, Polly, and CeCe went out and stole a shit ton of stuff a couple months ago, furniture mainly, and some dishes and all that shit. The only reason we have dressers and desks are because of them." Mike nodded and set his bag on the bed. "So, I think I'm gonna leave you to it, let you get settled in. If you want to unpack your bag, the last three drawers are empty. We'll all be right down the hall." Mike nodded again and Axel left, closing the door but leaving it cracked. He sat on the bed and leaned against the wall, sighing and closing his eyes.

Hey El? You there?

It was a couple seconds before she answered.

Yeah, I'm here. Are you okay? Are you there yet?

Yeah, we're here. I'm supposed to get settled in my room, I'm sharing with Axel.

I miss you already.

I miss you too, El. I wish you could've come with me but it's safer this way. And better for you.

How is me being away from you better? For all you know I could have followed you guys.

Mike couldn't help but chuckled at that.

Shawn and Axel would've sensed you and told me if you did, El. I slept a little on the ride here but then we all had a conversation about you.

About me? Why?

There's a good reason Kali didn't want you coming with us, and I agree with her.

Why?

Well, for one, the labs off your radar now. They think you're actually dead, and they'd be after me.

But I'd be in hiding with you and I'd be even safer!

That might be true, but we both want you to have a normal life, Ellie. As normal as possible, at least. I mean, you've got school and friends and family now, real family, and we don't want to take it away from you.

I'd rather be with you, you know that.

I wish it could be that way. I really do, but it can't be. I don't care as long as your safe and happy.
I'm not happy without you!

This conversation continued for another ten minutes or so, and then went on to talking to his mom, sisters and the Party through El.

"Hey, dude, you alright in here?" Axel asked, sticking his head in the door. Mike opened his eyes.

"Um, yeah, just been talking to my girlfriend. Has it been an hour already?" He asked. Axel nodded. "Um, okay, let me tell her and I'll be there in a minute."

"We'll be in a room a little further down the hall this way," He pointed down the hall. "In the classroom. Just follow the voices and the door will be open." Mike nodded and Axel left again.

I have to go, we're having a meeting or something I think. I'll talk to you after, okay?

Okay...Promise?

Promise. I love you.

I love you too.

He got up and went down the hall, following the voices like Axel had said. He bit his lip as he shuffled into the room, thankful that all the attention didn't come back on him as soon as he walked through the door. There were a bunch of desks in rows, what looked like a teachers desk at the front, with stacks of papers on it, a giant bookshelf with a crapton of textbooks, and a blackboard at the front. The walls were completely bare, other than a stick figure drawing

that had apparently been the work of Andi, as she'd signed her name under it.

"This doesn't look like a classroom." He muttered, but apparently, they all heard him and turned to look at him.

"What do classrooms look like?" John asked. Mike looked at him, noticing the black hair and black eyes, kind of nervous with how big the guy was. He didn't know most of their names, and definitely didn't know their abilities, but he had to guess his was super strength.

"Um, well, most teachers made posters and stuff. You know, about what we were learning? They'd put them up on the wall and stuff, try to make it exciting."

"Could we do something like that?" CeCe asked. He shrugged.

"I mean yeah, I could help make some posters. You just need poster boards." They stared at him, confused. "You don't know what poster boards are?" They shook their heads. "Um, it's basically, uh, just big pieces of paper or cardboard, sometimes plastic."

"Oh, so like cardboard from a box?" Nora asked.

"Well not *exactly* but that would work." He shrugged.

"I think Mike's gonna be teaching us more than we teach him." Brittany joked, and Kali snorted, nodding in agreement.

"He's really smart for his age, so he'll probably be able to help you guys out with your schooling while he does his."

"I have school?" He asked, cocking his head. She nodded.

"Yep, we have a bunch of workbooks and stuff for every grade." Mike made an impressed face and nodded.

"So, I think we should maybe introduce everyone to Mike, right?" Mack asked. They all shrugged or nodded. "You can sit anywhere if you want." She told him. He nodded and sat in the empty seat next to Axel, who grinned at him.

"John, you first." Kali said. "We'll go in order of number." John nodded.

"Well, I'm John Smith, I was experiment number one. I'm twenty two, and I have super strength. I *was* supposed to be the perfect soldier, without any kind of attachment. As in, no emotions, nothing like that, like I was supposed to kill without remorse, but it didn't turn out that way. They ended up throwing me out because I wasn't what they wanted, and they went on the hunt for another like me. Pretty sure they didn't find one though."

"When was this?" Mike asked.

"About a year ago." He said, shrugging. "Some of the labs aren't exactly...as productive as they should be."

"More like most of them, fucking idiots." CeCe muttered.

"How many labs are there?" Mike asked.

"As far as we know, eight, including

Hawkins lab." Shawn replied. Mike nodded.

"So...when they get rid of an experiment, they literally just try and replace them?" He asked. "Number and all?" A couple of them nodded.

"Yeah, that's why our age gaps are so random. You'd think the first one would be the oldest, and the most recent the youngest, but that's not the case. Ender figured that out because of her teleportation."

"Yeah, before I escaped I found some of the official documents and stole them. They're somewhere in my room." She shrugged.

"I ended up finding out about the bunker through Axel a couple months ago, around September." John said, Axel nodded in agreement, grinning. "He knew Kali and introduced me, and they took me in."

"Nora, your turn." Mike turned to her as she started speaking. She light blue eyes and copper hair.

"I was experiment number two, and I'm eighteen. I'm a shapeshifter, but it's just with my features. Like, I can change color of my hair and eyes, facial features, stuff like that. I can change others too, like I could make your hair longer or lighter if I wanted to."

"Yeah, for us who escaped, if we go outside she'll change some of our features." Axel said, grinning. "It's really cool. Not as cool as fire, but ya know." Mike cracked a smile at that.

"I'm not sure what my entire backstory is, but I do know is that I wasn't in the lab my entire life. The first number two experiment could shapeshift into animals, but they ended up forcing the guy to do it too much and drained him, and he died. I was four, I think, when they got me. I don't remember life before the lab though. I escaped by turning myself into one of the scientists who were supposed to be off that day. I pretended that I left something and then just walked out."

"These lab workers are stupid." Mike said, rolling his eyes.

"That's why the can't keep experiments for more than twenty years." Nora shrugged. "I escaped when I was seventeen. I found, well, Catherine found me, and we lived in the woods for a while, and then Shawn found us in August." He nodded.

"I'm next, I guess. I'm number three, and my name is Polly, short for Polybius. I'm 18." She said. She had straight brown hair and blue eyes. Mike raised an eyebrow.

"But you're so fucking tall. You look older." She chuckled and shrugged.

"I guess I just had good genetics. I was born *in* the lab. My mom worked there, but got in an accident so I was born prematurely. They took care of me and I thought they meant good for years, but I escaped when I was sixteen. I lived on the streets for a while, until I met Shawn and Kali."

"I'm Brittany, number four, and I'm the oldest, twenty five. As you can see, earth manipulation is my ability." She said. "I can make shields, make the earth move, like an earthquake, but Andi's better at

that." She winked at Andi, who snorted. "I can create underground rooms as well, for hiding and such." Mike nodded. "I met John and Mack on a grocery run a couple months ago and they took me in. I was living in the streets too."

"You already know about us two." Mack said, gesturing to her and Shawn.

"But what about your story?" He asked. Mack sighed, making a face like it was gonna kill her to explain.

"Basically, I was in a lab in Britain, and one of the guards took pity on me when I was six and we both escaped and moved here." She said. "After that, that lab shut down and hasn't been involved with the Projects since as far as we know. I met Kali at a park."

"Where is he now?"

"He lives in an apartment in the city." She told him.

"Why don't you go to school?" She shrugged.

"He thought homeschooling was best. He homeschools all of us, actually." He nodded and looked at Shawn.

"I found the bunker by total accident. It was abandoned, apparently, as no one has ever come back here, other than us. I was just walking around in the woods and stepped on the door. A couple days later, I found Kali in an alley. She scared the shit outta me too, had snakes wrapping around my arms." He gave her a pointed look and she snorted. "We ended up partnering up and started transforming the bunker. Then we started finding everyone else." He said, and then nodded towards CeCe, who had brown hair and blue eyes.

"I was number seven, and I'm fourteen. I can teleport and fly. I escaped from the lab when I was six, and I don't really remember much from before or after, really. I stayed with some people up until I was about thirteen and ran away for uh, reasons, and found out about the bunker through Andi."

"You know who I am," Axel said, bowing playfully. "The lab was about to kill me because my powers aren't exactly useful, but I

escaped with my insane ability to sneak around-"

"What's your definition of sneak?" Andi asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Shh." He shushed her, grinning cheekily. "I was telling him my *story* Princess, shush it."

"Hey, Kali?" Andi asked. Kali looked at her. "Can I electrocute him?"

3. Chapter 3

So for Catherine I added the healing part, which DEFINITELY has significance, and the reason I changed Ender's completely is because as of right now, Mike is the only person who's pyrokinetic ;)

Also, y'all better love me cus I typed at least a thousand words of this on my phone and it took two hours and my thumbs hurt. Life's a bitch sometimes, and so is my computer, which is fucked up somehow, someway and won't be fixed for at least two weeks, maybe more, but hopefully it'll be BEFORE then. Anyways, I hope this chapter is okay and hey, it only took almost two weeks to post and not a month!

P.S. I just finished The 100 today and watched ep 1 of S5 and I love. Legitimately thinking about writing a The 100 AU but with Stranger Things characters (*FAR* in the future).

"Nah, maybe some other time." Andi huffed in mock annoyance and motioned for him to go on.

"Anyways, as I was saying, before I was *rudely* interrupted," She flipped him off, "I escaped but they're still after me I think, so they can kill me. That lab was close to New York so I went there, and met my two best friends, Quinn and Hansen, and they're the *only* two people who know about me and what I can do, other than Mack's dad, ya know?" Mike shook his head at him, giving him an amused look. "Aye, we're cracking you out of your shell!" Mike rolled his eyes at that. Axel laughed. "Anyways, I found Kali in New York and annoyed her to death and she brought me back with her." The dark haired, dark eyed boy said excitedly. "I love Kali but she hates me."

"I don't necessarily *hate* you." She rolled her eyes. "Andi, go before he starts talking again."

"I'm Andi and I was number ten. I'm fifteen and I can create storms, but my specialty is tornadoes, thunder, and lightning. Tornadoes mainly 'cause I like causing trouble and shit so…" She shrugged. "Dip

shit over here," She pointed a thumb at Axel, "Is how I found out about the bunker." He stuck his tongue out at her. Mike noted how she avoided the backstory entirely, and raised an eyebrow, but turned to the next one.

"Tannern, your turn." Kali told him. Mike turned to look at the brown haired, hazel eyed boy. He hadn't said much since he got there, so Mike figured he was just shy. And he was right.

"Um, I'm Tannern, number thirteen, I'm fifteen. I have chronopathy. I was in Hawkins lab before I got out, but they somehow erased my memory from my past life, so I don't know how old I was when they got me. Shawn found me." He kept it pretty short, and gave a nod to signal he was finished.

"I'm Catherine, but you can call me Cath or my actual name." She shrugged a little. She had blonde hair and bright green eyes. "I was number fourteen, and I'm fourteen years old." He was a little thankful that she added *years old* to that because it might've confused him a little. "I was kept in a lab until I was ten in New York, and escaped and a family took me in. When I was twelve they tried to turn me in for money, because their oldest kid had cancer, and I ran away. I was going to Hawkins, trying to be all big and bad and do something about them but Kali took me in before I had a chance to. I've known her the longest, before the bunker." She explained. "I have the ability to amplify powers, say, I touched your arm and you conjured up some power, it'd be hotter, stronger, more powerful. If I touched Tannern, he'd be able to see a couple more seconds into the future."

"She can also heal you." Shawn told him. "If you get hurt she can heal you."

"Not like, incredibly bad injuries, cuts, bruises, broken bones I can deal with. If a knife or bullet hits you in just the right spot I can't do anything about it except stop the bleeding some." Mike made a face. "I can sense injuries, like, looking at you now I can tell you've had a good bit of bruising on your back, arm and legs and bruised ribs recently, which are healing nicely might I add." He nodded, biting his lip.

"I'm Ender." He looked over at her, noticing her brown hair and green

eyes. "Number 15. Telepathy and teleportation, which you already know about. I escaped the lab only about a year ago, I'm sixteen by the way. I was on my own for majority of the year, I had nowhere to stay and I didn't eat for days on end, and they found me a couple months ago. I was the newest, until you came along." She looked at Kali to show that she was finished.

"Well, now you know everyone. Think you can remember all their names?" She joked. He nodded seriously.

"If I can memorize the periodic table I think I can memorize their names." He said. They all looked at him, eyes wide and eyebrows raised. "What?"

"Nerd." Axel coughed.

"Fuck off." Mike rolled his eyes.

Ha, he called you a nerd.

"Holy shit, El." He muttered. "Are you watching us?" He asked accusingly, looking around even though he knew he wouldn't see her.

Maybe

"He's gone crazy already. Hasn't even been down here two hours." Andi said. "Fuck."

"No, he's not crazy." Kali rolled her eyes. "El can see him in the void."

"In the who what now?" Ender made a face.

"She's making fun of me 'cause you called me a nerd. You're one to talk, El, all you do is read so…" he made a fart noise. He was eyeing the corner of the room, which was where she was standing, but no one could actually see her.

You are a nerd. I have to go, dad's calling. I'll talk to you later, promise. I love you.

"I love you too." He looked around at everyone, who looked confused. He sighed,

"It's a long story."

"A very long story." Kali added. "Which we can talk about later, we should get food started before it gets too late." Everyone agreed and most of them left the room, while only Kali, Axel, and Andi remained.

"So um, how exactly do you make dinner for fourteen people?" He asked.

"Lots and lots of stolen meat." Kali said, sighing. "And a lot of other things. We don't like stealing but it's what we do to survive." She shrugged.

"John and Brittany cook the meat and Cath and Polly usually take care of vegetables and stuff, which is thanks to Brittany for growing them." Andi told him. Mike nodded and bit his lip.

"While we wait on the food, can we show him the rest of the bunker? Like the training room and stuff?" Axel asked. Kali nodded.

"Be back to the mess hall in thirty minutes." She said. Mike raised an eyebrow, *mess hall* sounded fancy to him, for whatever reason. She walked out and Axel and Andi grinned at each other.

"Let's go." Andi motioned for them to follow her and they did. After a few minutes of walking, Mike asked,

"How big is the bunker?"

"Uh, big. Like a hundred and fifty people can live here comfortably." Andi explained. "And over two hundred but it'd be pretty crowded."

"Yeah, some people would have to share beds and shit and that's a no go for me." Axel said, running ahead and opening a door. Mike followed Andi inside and stopped in the doorway, eyes wide. "This is where we keep all our weapons and stuff." He explained. The wall opposite the door had probably hundreds of guns lining it, along with *swords and knives.* The left wall had what seemed to be amo and the right wall had human shaped targets.

"Yeah, I see that." Mike muttered, looking around.

"And through that door is our training rooms and such." Andi told him, walking forward and opening the door..

"Training *rooms*?" He asked. The two nodded.

"Yep. What, you expect us to only use our powers while fighting?" Axel asked. "Because not all of us have very useful powers in a fight. Except maybe Tannern, 'cause he can see like two seconds into the future."

"That doesn't seem very helpful if I'm being honest."

"It can be." Andi replied. "Anyways, we all train with weapons like guns and knives in one room, we do hand to hand combat in some of the rooms, and others we practice with our powers. I can conjure up a storm and not be affected by it, unless it's rain, whereas I'll get wet but that's about it. Brittany is the only one who practices outside, 'cause of nature and all that jazz."

"Yours are technically nature too, you know." Axel pointed out.

"I know." She rolled her eyes. "We've got the four elements, now." She grinned. "You know what those are, right?"

"Earth, wind, fire and water." He stuck his tongue out at her. "Also known as Brittany, CeCe and Mike."

"Wait, that's only three." She made a face and looked at Mike, who raised an eyebrow and held his hands up. One was covered in flames, and the other he was twirling water in the air. "Oh, right. You've got two."

"Three." Axel corrected. "Speaking of three, how did you not know you could teleport?" Mike shrugged and followed Andi back out in the hall.

"The whole reason I was in the lab to begin with was because of El. See, she escaped in '83 and was missing for a year before she closed the gate, but turns out she was living with the chief of police, who is now her adoptive father by the way, I'm not blaming her for it at all, because it isn't her fault. They tried to get information out of me about where she was and I just told them she was dead. I didn't even

know about the fire until my fifteenth birthday, and then I just randomly found out about the water. When I escaped I didn't even think about teleporting, I was focused on not passing out and getting home." He shrugged. They looked at each other and Axel said,

"I'm hoping the beginning of that is in your story because I'm confused as fuck."

4. Chapter 4

Omg I actually kinda sorta updated when I said I would! It's a MIRACLE. Anyways, it might seem like Mike is okay but he's not, and something happens next chapter and Mike breaks. There's a pretty big time jump, nearly a year, but throughout the story stuff that happened during that time will be mentioned but not in too much detail. I hope you like the chapter! I don't like it much but what are ya gonna do.

Saturday, April 12, 1986

It's been a month to the day since Mike left to live in the bunker. He thought that he'd feel like a prisoner again, but that was hardly the case. Over the last month, he talked to his family and friends through El at least once or twice a day, and he talked to her constantly throughout. He still missed them a lot, resulting in no sleep some nights. He's gotten a little closer with everyone, well, almost everyone, but mainly Andi, Axel, Catherine, Tannern and Polly. He'd gotten used to Axel, like they said he would, but he was glad he was there, he reminded him of a more energetic (and definitely more *athletic*) version of Dustin. Tannern reminded him of Will, cool, calm and collected. He was the quietest one out of them all, he rarely talked, and when he did, it was just the two of them. The other three just did their best to keep his mind off of everything as much as possible.

He'd started back with school about a week after arriving, and met Mack's dad, Asher, who ended up kind of reminding him of Mr. Clarke. He could tell where he was from, as he still had a strong accent, that Axel mocked none stop. Mike's had to quite literally hold himself back from flicking a tiny fireball at him on more than one occasion.

Speaking of fireballs, Mike discovered that he could, in fact, make them after about a week in the bunker. He'd been training with Kali when someone popped up out of nowhere on the other end of the room and he threw one out of fear, which had caused Polly, the one who popped up, to laugh her ass off at him.

As for Kali, just like she and Hopper talked about, called during the weekend to schedule a day to come out, whereas he would come on Tuesday since El would be at school and unable to find Mike in the void, and inevitably, Hopper.

Tuesday, April 15, 1986
9 AM

Mike had absolutely no idea that Hopper was coming today, so when Hopper and Polly appeared from thin air, he had a mini heart attack and screamed. It wasn't a girly scream like John, of all peoples, but more of a scratchy yell that got stuck in his throat. Hopper couldn't help but laugh at the look on his face. Upon hearing the *scream,* everyone rushed into the kitchen to see what was going on.

"I... Hopper?...What?...How?...Huh?" He made a face as he looked at him. Hopper took his hat off and set it on the table, grinning at Mike.

"Hey, kid. You know, I didn't expect that scream, but I *did* expect a hug." He looked at him pointedly. Mike blinked a couple times and CeCe pushed him forward. He darted over to him and hugged him tightly before Hopper had a chance to react. He stumbled slightly, chuckling and hugging him back. "I missed you too, kid." He patted his head. After a couple seconds, Mike pulled away.

"What are you doing here?"

"I'm going to be coming by monthly to check in on you." He explained. "I'm assuming Kali didn't mention it?" Mike turned and glared at Kali, who avoided his gaze.

"I'd say that was an icy glare but uh…" Axel snickered and Andi smacked his shoulder.

"Shut it before he throws another fireball at you." She hissed. Mike crossed his arms and glared at Hopper.

"You could have told me too, you know. I mean, seeing my girlfriends dad appear out of literally thin air almost made me shit myself."

"Ugh, they aren't being very good role models, huh?" He said, shaking

his head and clapping Mike on the back. "I see they're feeding you good, though."

"He's gained only like five pounds." Catherine said.

"You should've seen him the day he escaped. All skin and bones." He shrugged and Mike rolled his eyes.

"Not my fault they hardly fed me anything. I can't eat ham and cheese sandwiches without gagging."

"Same." Kali agreed. Mike then noticed something over Hopper's shoulder and raised an eyebrow.

"Oh, yeah." He grabbed the strap and pulled it around him, revealing a guitar case. "This isn't your guitar, because if I had gone to your house and got it and left it would have been pretty suspicious, so I got you a new one. You can call it an early, late birthday and Christmas present." He handed the case over to Mike. "And it'll give you something to do outside of this training I heard about." Mike just stared at it. He looked at Hopper and blinked. Hopper saw his eyes start to shine. "Wait, no, don't you start crying. I didn't want to make you cry." Mike sniffed and looked down at his feet. He wiped his eyes quickly and mumbled an apology. "Don't apologize kid, I figured you'd be happy."

"No, I am." Mike nodded. "Just…"

"He's happy." Shawn explained. "Ish."

"Uh, yeah, what he said." He took the case from Hopper and set it on the ground, crouching next to it as he unzipped it and opened it.

"The guy where I got it from said he tuned it for me so… yeah, I don't know if you'll still need to or what."

"It depends on what I'm playing." Mike told him, taking it out of the case and admiring it. "I love it. Thanks, Hop." Mike smiled at him and stood up, giving him another hug.

"Well, since we're all in here, why not introduce this giant? Please and thank you." Andi said.

"This is Chief Hopper." Mike told them, looking at their way. "He's El's dad."

"Oh, the girlfriends dad, huh?" Ender wiggled her eyebrows at him. Mike flipped her off.

"Why don't you play something, Mike?" Brittany suggested. He bit his lip and looked at Hopper, who shrugged.

"Go ahead, kid." Mike nodded and sat on a chair. He messed around with the strings for a minute or two and then played for a while. During this, Axel and Andi had jokingly began slow-ish dancing, the two giggling. Mike couldn't help but notice the way Andi was looking at Axel, though. It was a look he'd seen on Max's face many times before, looking at Lucas. She noticed him staring and made a face, and he looked away, giving Hopper a grin.

"How long are you staying?" Mike asked him, a little while later.

"I can't stay too long, I've gotta get back before school let's out, so I'll probably leave around one?" Mike nodded, looking at the guitar, which he'd put back in it's case and had it leaning against the wall. Mike stood and motioned for Hopper to follow him. He led him to he and Axel's room and shut the door behind them.

"Please tell me the clean side is yours." Hopper said. Mike chuckled and nodded.

"Yeah, that's Axel's side."

"You've gotta share with him?"

"I mean I don't *have* to. I could've got a room to myself but I didn't wanna be alone and he was the only other guy without a roommate so… Yeah. You get used to him after a while."

"Is he as bad as Dustin?"

"Nah, he's worse." Mike plopped down on his bed and sat Indian style. He patted the space next to him and Hopper snorted, sitting down.

"So…" Hopper trailed off and looked at Mike. "How's it been?" Mike shrugged.

"It's okay, I guess. I miss you guys." He brought his knees up to his chest and rested his chin on his knees. "I talk to El all the time but… how is she really?"

"She hasn't cried in three days." He replied, looking at his clasped hands. Mike sighed.

"I cried last night because I realized I wouldn't get to see my sister graduate." Hopper didn't say anything for a couple seconds.

"Couldn't that one girl like...change your features or something? Maybe you could sneak and come watch and maybe visit for the day." Hopper had been introduced to everyone shortly after he arrived. Mike snorted.

"I doubt Kali would let me do that."

"It isn't up to Kali. You have a choice, kid, remember? You can leave whenever you want. That's what I was told." Mike shrugged. "If she doesn't keep her promises I *will* take you back with me, let you stay at the cabin until we think it's safe. I managed to hide El for a year, I could hide you if I have to."

"It'd be better than this place." He grumbled. "I told them I'd stay here, all of them. I can't go back on that but… I want to see her graduate. I can't go three years without seeing everyone." He rubbed at his face and Hopper noticed the circles under his eyes. They'd hardly gotten better from when he escaped.

"You haven't been sleeping, have you?" Mike bit his lip and didn't say anything for a minute or two.

"I've cried myself to sleep almost every night since I came here. Let's just say I'm great at hiding it." He gave him a smile. Hopper put a hand on his shoulder.

"It'll get better, kid." He told him. "I know it doesn't seem like it, it doesn't to me. I'm still so used to seeing you nearly everyday. It'll suck, yeah, but when you finally get to come home and *not* worry

about anything, that *will* be the best day of your life."

5. Chapter 5

Mike doesn't get to go to Nancy's graduation and Nancy flips her shit on Hopper.

Remember last chapter, where I said that something happens that makes Mike break? Well, that's actually next chapter. Probably. Oops XD

We're gonna say that Mike was around 5'7 in June and 5'11 in December.

Tuesday, June 3, 1986

"I think that it's complete *bullshit* that Kali wouldn't let him come see me graduate." Nancy exclaimed, throwing her cap on the couch and crossing her arms. They were back at the Byers house after graduation, and everyone else was outside celebrating.

"It was in his best interests, kid." Hopper said, leaning against the wall. "I tried to convince her, and El told me that Mike's tried to convince her, but she wouldn't relent."

"His *best interests*? She isn't his mother! She isn't his fucking *sister*! She's just trying to save her own ass because if Mike was still around, the lab would be out looking for him and would end up finding her too."

"Look, I know, okay? I know it sucks. I want him home just as much as you do-"

"I'm sure you'd love to try and hide him away too, wouldn't you?" She snapped. Hopper's eyes widened. "I know you would. I know for a *fact* that if he was home right now, he would be locked in that goddamn cabin for who knows how long. And he'll be back before his graduation? How does he know? For all we know, Kali and the rest of those-those *people* could be hurting him! And we can't do anything about it."

"They're not hurting him, Nancy." He spoke, crossing his arms as well. "And I *wouldn't* keep him locked up in there. I would deal with the lab myself if I could, but I don't know where they are now. Owens doesn't even know-"

"Speaking of Owens! How do we know he wasn't the one who had Mike and Kali? What if Kali was on Owens side and hid Mike from you? *What if* he let them go just so they could go on a wild goose chase? The lab probably *knows* exactly where they are, and are just waiting for the perfect time to attack. How do you know? Hm? How do you know?"

"Goddammit, kid." Hopper sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. "I *know* that it's not Owens, okay? I *know* that Mike's fine. Kali is just trying to keep him safe and I *know* that. It's you who needs to understand that we're just trying to keep your brother safe. I understand that it's hard and that you miss him." Nancy froze, her stare nearly sending chills up his spine.

"I don't understand?" She asked, narrowing her eyes at him. "I do. I do understand. It's you who doesn't. Your daughter died, Hopper, but you got a second chance. I won't get a second chance if something happens to him. I won't *get* another brother. I don't *want* another brother. I want Mike!" Hopper's eyes softened at the tears glistening in her eyes.

"I'm sorry, kid." He said quietly.

"You're sorry?"

"Yeah! Yeah, I'm sorry. I'm sorry I let him go, okay? I want him to be safe and I know he's safe. No one knows about the bunker, trust me, I've checked around. It'll all be okay soon."

"It'll be okay soon? Nothing about this is okay, Hopper! Nothing about this is okay!" Those words brought back memories. Mike said the *exact* same thing when he found out about El. "Not anymore, and it hasn't been in a *long* time."

Mike had been a moping mess back at the bunker, which was to be expected. He'd only come out of he and Axel's room to eat breakfast

and lunch, grumpily waiting for El to let him know when graduation was over and he could talk to Nancy through her. He'd ended up going to the training room and punching one of the practice dummies they had until his knuckles bled. He'd yelled that it wasn't fair and just straight up *ignored* Kali for two weeks over it.

About two weeks later, Hopper came for his visit and brought pictures for Mike, which resulted in Mike crying and destroying a couple dummies with fire.

Monday, December 22, 1986

"Come on, Wheeler, show me what you got!" Axel yelled, diving behind one of the barriers in the main training room.

"If I showed you what I got, you'd be dead, fuck wad!" Mike yelled back, throwing a knife at a dummy. Axel groaned and got up, pouting as he walked over to Mike and Tannern.

"Why are you so mean to me?" He whined, crossing his arms. Mike just rolled his eyes and threw another knife. He'd taken a liking to it, after watching Tannern a couple months after he arrived. Despite the fact that Mike walked around like a baby giraffe learning to walk and could hardly talk and walk at the same time, he had pretty good hand-eye coordination.

"According to some people," Mike said, throwing another knife, "It's just hormones. Because I'm a sixteen year old boy, who grows a fucking inch in a month," Another one, "who's legs hurt like a bitch because of it. Who had to leave his entire family behind because these goddamn *Projects* want to kill me." Axel dropped his arms.

"You're not mean to everyone though."

"Keep calling me mean. I'll show you mean." Mike snapped.

"Wait, you're technically not sixteen yet. Your birthdays tomorrow."

"Axel, shut up." Tannern sighed. Mike dropped the last knife on the ground, turned on his heel and walked out. Tannern glared at him before jogging after Mike, nearly having to jog to keep up with him.

"I'm sorry about him." Mike ran a hand through his hair, fingers getting caught at the end. He needed to brush it. No, cut it, but he outright refused to let anyone near his hair with scissors.

"It's fine." He muttered. "Axel's just being Axel but Mike is gonna beat his ass if he doesn't quit. God, why did I just speak in third person?" He face palmed and Tannern chuckled.

"You've been around Axel and Andi too much." Mike glanced at him, immediately noticing the look on his face at the mention of Andi. He nudged him, slowing down a bit.

"Why don't you just tell her, man?" Tannern rolled his eyes.

"Not happening. She doesn't like me back."

"How do you know?" Mike asked, stopping and leaning against the wall.

"Because she likes Axel. And he probably likes her too."

"See that's where you're wrong, Tan, if Axel liked her back, I'm sure that he'd let it be known. I like Andi, she's a cool girl, obviously not as cool as *my* girl, but I don't think he likes her. Not like that, at least."

"Speaking of El," Tannern paused, biting his lip. "How exactly did you tell her that you liked her?" Mike snorted.

"Well, I'm gonna be straight up. I basically told her that she'd be like my sister, then tried to explain that she wouldn't, then I kissed her." Tannern made a face. "Yeah, definitely not one of my finest moments. The worst she could say is no, dude. Give it a try." Mike looked down the hallway as he heard his name being called. "Guessing Hop's here, let me know if you ask." Tannern nodded in in a second, Mike was gone. Gone as in just completely disappeared. Polly, CeCe and Ender had taken it upon themselves to train Mike in teleporting, and now, it was one of his favorite things to do. Every once in a while he'd just pop up out of nowhere and scare them, but he mainly bothered Axel with it because he screamed like a girl every time.

Mike appeared in front of Hopper, nearly giving him a heart attack.

"Jesus, kid, stop doing that!" Hopper exclaimed, putting a hand over his heart. Mike snickered. "God, you've gotten taller since last time."

"He grew an entire inch this month." Asher told him. Hopper raised an eyebrow. "What?"

"He measures and weighs us like every month like a doctor." Mack said, plopping down in a chair.

"I'm gonna sit, because my damn legs hurt." Mike said, sitting next to Mack and stretching his legs out.

"I believe it. It'd be impossible for them not to hurt, growing an inch in a month." Hopper commented, patting him on the back. He put a wrapped box on the table in front of him, a giant bow on top.

"Love the bow." Mike said, raising an eyebrow.

"Well, it's all we had. El insisted that we used giant ones so…" He shrugged. Mike grinned at the mention of her. "I was going to try and come tomorrow but… the rest of your friends wanted to throw a little celebration for you." Mike's grinned dropped off his face. "Dammit, I never say the right thing. I'm sorry, kid. Look, here, open it. I think this'll put that smile back on your face." Mike rolled his eyes playfully but snatched the box off the table and unwrapped it.

"Somebody got a knife?" Mike asked. Axel walked in, holding one of the ones Mike had been throwing.

"If you hadn't been throwing these at dummies you'd have one." Mike rolled his eyes and snatched it from him.

"I don't see any knives on you though?" Brittany said, tilting her head slightly. He flipped her off and those who were in the kitchen with them laughed. Mike stabbed the hell out of the package, the knife tearing through the tape quickly.

"Careful, kid." Hopper chuckled. Mike raised an eyebrow but nodded. He put the knife on the table and ripped the rest of the box open and his mouth dropped open.

"You got me another Walkman?" He asked. "A *new* one?" Hopper

nodded, grinning.

"Yep, *and* there are a couple tapes in there. I wasn't exactly sure what you liked so I just got those." Mike grabbed the four tapes in the corner, looking through them. Guns N' Roses, The Cure, The Beatles and Metallica.

"Dude I fuck-oops, freaking love these." Mike said, looking at him, giving him a sheepish grin. He'd tried not to cuss much in front of Hopper when he was here, out of respect, but eight months later he was still struggling. Mike gave him a look and snickered. He stood up and hugged him for a couple seconds. "Thanks, Hop."

"No problem. Happy birthday, kid."

6. Chapter 6

Mike's definitely not a fan of Kali at the moment.

Next chapter picks up about a week later, when Hopper comes to visit.

Yeah, I've been writing Hopper's visits a lot more than I expected but I don't even care, I love it.

Thursday, January 15, 1987

"Hey Mike?" Kali asked, walking into his room. He looked up and took his headphones off.

"What?"

"Do you wanna go outside?" She asked. He stared at her for a minute.

"What?"

"Don't tell me you forgot what outside meant." Ender joked, joining Kali by the door. He flipped her off and sat up.

"I haven't been outside in what? Almost a year now?" Kali bit her lip and nodded. "Why now? What's in it for you?"

"We need your help." She sighed, and sat on Axel's bed.

"With what, exactly?"

"We found out about another lab." She said. His eyes widened. "And there's another experiment, number sixteen. Four years old."

"How did you find out?"

"Let's just say that Asher has some buddies on the inside who lets him know." She replied.

"Okay… And how am I supposed to help you with that?"

"Well… We want you to burn the lab down."

"What." He deadpanned.

"Andi could probably do it, with her lightning but that's dangerous."

"I'm the fucking definition of dangerous, right now, Kali." Mike rolled his eyes. "And why can't Brittany, just like, bury the lab in the ground or something?"

"Because everything could be dug out, all the information, everything. It would take a while, yeah, but they'd get what they need. We want to destroy everything."

"Even the people?" He asked, crossing his arms. "How many people would I end up killing?"

"Look, Mike, these people would be better off dead." She said. "They're torturing *children*. They're working them to death, and I want to stop it."

"No, you want your revenge, don't you?" He tilted his head to the side. "Like with the man you tried to make El kill." Kali's eyes widened at that. "Yeah, she told us all about that, Kali."

"That's not what this is. We're trying to help save lives."

"By killing hundreds of people?"

"Yeah!" She exclaimed. Ender took that as her cue to *leave* and she was gone in an instant. "That's exactly what I want to do. I want to prevent the lab from getting more people like us for as long as I can. I want to *stop* it, and you're our best bet right now." Mike stared at her for what felt like forever.

"You're using me." He said. She opened her mouth to reply but he interrupted her, "That's all you wanted me for, isn't it? You just wanted me to do your bidding, just like you wanted El."

"I want closure." She said calmly. He made a face.

"Killing innocent people is closure for you?"

"They're not innocent, Mike! None of them are. The hundreds of people in those labs *know* what they're doing to kids, and they don't care." He didn't say anything for a couple minutes, which made her think that he was talking to El. Or maybe Ender.

"How many labs are there." He demanded. She just stared at him. "Because I know damn well there's more than just one."

"Three. That we know of."

"Are there kids in those other labs?"

"We don't' know for certain, but it's likely."

"Find out." He stated, finally. "I'll fucking kill those people. If there are kids in the other two labs, I'll burn them down too. After that? I'm going home. Fuck waiting until graduation."

He was able to run around outside for a while, before they left. Him, Ender, Kali and Catherine. The main reason for Catherine going was just in case someone got hurt, which was apparently likely. The lab was in fucking Texas of all places. He was just glad it wasn't freezing. Kali and Ender went into the lab while he and Catherine waited in the trees.

"Hey Mike?" Catherine asked. He looked at her. "It'll be worth it, in the end." She said.

"You're on board with killing innocent people too? I didn't think you would be." He retorted.

"Mike, these people, *every single one of them,* they know what's happening to these children, most of which don't get out alive. And they don't do anything to stop it." Mike scoffed.

"That doesn't mean it should go down this way."

"You're right, it shouldn't, but the Projects have stolen our lives away from us and we're getting it back. Slowly but surely."

"So what exactly are we doing? Just taking down labs as we find

them until we find the Projects?"

"Basically, but it isn't that easy. Asher said that they move around quite a lot, so it's hard to track them."

"How does he even track them?"

"He won't tell us." She shrugged.

"It's probably bullshit." Catherine groaned.

"God, you're such a pessimist."

"Thanks, I know."

"Okay, listen to this, Mike. If that was your little sister in there, if that was Holly, would you just let them get away with it?" She asked, crossing her arms. He looked at her. "Would you rescue her, but leave those people to either hunt her down or replace her with another child?" She didn't know it was possible for someone to go without blinking for so long. When he spoke, he still didn't blink.

"You're right. I wouldn't let them get away with it. But this also isn't my sister. I don't fucking *know* what to do. Have you ever killed before?" She shook her head. "Yeah, me neither. I don't want to kill, it's not right. I'll do it, yeah, but that doesn't mean I'm fine with it like the rest of you." He turned away. It was quiet for a few minutes as they stared at the giant building. It was completely different from the one in Hawkins; bigger. Much bigger.

"Are you still going to leave?" She asked, quietly. He glanced at her. "After we take down the other two labs." He let out a long sigh.

"I don't know." He said simply, leaving it at that. It wasn't long after that when Kali and Ender appeared, a small child in Kali's arms.

"Now, Mike!" Kali rushed, setting the little boy on the ground. Mike stood up immediately and didn't even think as he raised his hands. The lab was in flames within seconds, and he couldn't bring himself to be worried as he stared at the flames. The ones *he* made. He could feel himself getting weaker as things began exploding throughout the building, causing the little boy to cry loudly. That's what brought

Mike out of his daze, and he dropped his arms, wiping the blood from his nose. He stared at the flames for another second, before turning to the girls. Ender was holding a box in her arms and Catherine was checking the little boy for injuries as he cried. He stared at Kali, who had a wide grin on her face.

"One down, two to go." She said brightly. He just stared at her. Eventually, he turned to Ender.

"Do you know his name?" He asked. She looked exhausted herself, from having to teleport so much. She shook her head and sat down, dropping the box in the process. He sat beside her and took his bag off his back, pulling out a water bottle and opening it for her.

"That's all the written files we could find." Kali said, joining them. "That's information on every other *sixteen,* including this one, so his name should be here somewhere." She explained. Mike began digging through the files. Eventually, he found a folder that looked pretty recent, as the others were a bit crumpled and bent. He opened it and sure enough, it was the little boy.

"His name is Tyler, no last name is on here. He just turned four in November, and they took him on December… powers similar to Brittany's." He made a face. "What the fuck are these labs even doing? Good God, they need to stick with this so called system." He continued reading off some of the stuff, and eventually, read, "Parents are… dead. No siblings or other family." He looked at the girls, who had sad looks on their faces. He could've laughed. He scooted closer to the little boy, holding out a hand. "Hey, little man, I guess you're stuck with us, huh?"

It didn't exactly set in what he'd done until hours later, when he was alone in his room. He'd had to teleport them back to the bunker because Ender was too drained to do so, and he'd nearly passed out himself, so he was fed and sent to his room to rest, which, didn't help him a bit. If CeCe hadn't come to check on him when she did, he would have burned everything in the room on accident, as he was too busy sobbing his heart out to notice what he was doing.

"Mike! Mike! Stop, everything's on *fire*!" She yelled, so loudly that

everyone nearly sprinted down to he and Axel's room, where Axel promptly let out a loud shriek. Mike's eyes snapped open, immediately waving his hand and putting out the fire.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" He cried, hugging his knees to his chest. Kali started to try and hug him but he flinched away. "No! You made me do it! You made me kill them!" He yelled, scooting away from her. If his eyes had been open, he'd have seen the regret in hers. He felt someone wrap him in a hug and he squirmed, trying to get away. "Let me go, Kali!" He sobbed.

"It's me, Mike, it's okay." Nora told him, squeezing him comfortingly.

"No it's not! They're dead because I fucking burned them to death!" He cried. Nora looked at Kali and everyone else, who looked close to tears as well.

"Everyone out, I'll be fine in here."

"Are you sure-" John started to ask but she gave him a look and he nodded, ushering everyone else out. She could faintly hear Polly and Mack start yelling at Kali as they walked down the hall.

"You'll be alright, you helped save that little boy." He just cried harder. She racked her brain, attempting to figure out some way to try and calm him down, something to say to him, but nothing came up. So, she started humming. She rocked back and forth in her spot a little, still holding him, as she hummed. She was surprised that it worked, though she figured it wasn't the humming or rocking, just him crying himself out. Soon, his cries turned into small whimpers and then hiccups. She twirled a curl on her finger lightly, rubbing up and down his arm with her other hand. She heard a soft snore and looked down at him, his eyes red and puffy, but he was asleep. She ran a hand through his hair and let out a sigh, leaning back on his pillows.

7. Chapter 7

iAmCc- She'll be getting some more moments for sure ;) And thank you! I'm sorry they deleted it, that sucks!

Cdsis- Yay! I'm glad you like it!

THESTRANGERLAB- lmao sorry this one wasn't as quick but I'ma start trying to work on it more since I'm done with Collision!

We have a very special guest in this one!

I don't like this chapter much but… what're ya gonna do?

My best friend graduated high school (a year early btw, can I say she's a smart bitch?) today! I've been busy for the last week and will stay busy for the next couple of days, which is one main reason this one wasn't posted as quick as the last, so sorry about that. I hope you guys like it even though I don't! XD

While the group of four were gone, there were many different things going on in and outside the bunker. Brittany, CeCe, Andi and Mack were outside training, Polly and Nora were in their room talking about who knows what, Shawn and John were with Asher, helping him gather some more school supplies, and Tannern and Axel were practicing knife throwing. Well, Tannern was and Axel was annoying him to death.

"You know, if I had powers like Mack, I'd have frozen your ass a while ago. Or electrocuted you like Andi." Axel snickered and pretended to poke him with the knife in his hand. "We don't have a healer right now, you shit! Stop before I blink you out of existence."

"Wait, you can do that?" Axel asked, pausing his poking to look at him.

"Yeah." Tannern sighed. Axel stayed quiet for a good ten minutes, which surprised Tannern, but was glad nonetheless. He hit his target perfectly every time. He looked at Axel, who was staring off into

space. He nudged his shoulder and Axel looked at him.

"What?"

"Are you alright in the head?" Axel snorted.

"No." He shrugged. "If you can go back to the past or whatever, why don't you just go make sure the Projects were never formed and then we'd all be okay?"

"It's a lot more complicated than that, Axel." Tannern told him. "It's dangerous."

"How is it complicated?"

"It just is, okay? If you do one wrong thing, everything could end up in disaster."

"Everything's a disaster already." Tannern looked at him and pointed.

"That is the smartest thing I've ever heard come out of your mouth."

"Have you ever sneezed so hard you farted?" Andi asked, attempting to distract Mack. Mack froze, literally, and looked at her.

"What the fuck, Andi? Ask Mike when they get back, he sneezes like a hundred times a day." She continued shooting ice at the figures Brittany made out of the ground. Andi snickered and waved her hand, making a rainbow appear in the sky.

"It's so pretty." CeCe said, glancing at her, and then back at the sky. Andi grinned at her and winked. CeCe made a face. "What?" Andi motioned with her head to follow her and walked off. CeCe followed her, putting her hands on her hips. "What?" She repeated.

"I made the rainbow for you." She said, appearing from behind a tree. CeCe jumped and glared at her.

"Don't do that!" Andi snickered. "And why would you make it for me?" Andi gave her a look. CeCe made a face and then realized it. "What the hell? What if they found out?"

"There's nothing wrong with it!" Andi exclaimed. "You know everyone would except you." CeCe snorted.

"I doubt it." She shook her head. "Not happening."

"Why? Why don't you just *see*? If they're bothered by it, fuck them."

"Why don't you tell Axel you like him?" She threw back. Andi rolled her eyes.

"That's completely different. I'm just trying to help you. There's nothing wrong with being gay. No, most people don't like it, but a lot don't give two shits either. Ask Mike, he'll tell you that!"

"How would Mike know? He hasn't been home in almost a year!"

"I don't think that matters. If people accepted it then, they accept it now. Like I said, I'm just trying to help you, as your friend. It's up to you if you tell them, but I guarantee you'll feel a lot better when you do." CeCe didn't say anything for a minute or two.

"I will, soon, I think. I… I kinda wanna talk to Mike too, you know? Just to see what he says. He's pretty good with advice."

"That's the spirit! Kinda." Andi threw an arm around CeCe's shoulders as they walked back towards the other two.

"On one condition though."

"Hm?"

"You've gotta tell Axel you like him."

"Fuck."

It was a couple hours later when the group finally arrived, a crying child in Kali's arms as Catherine held an exhausted Ender up, and an almost as equally as exhausted Mike, holding a box. Mike nearly fell over but John caught him, helping him sit down. He dropped the box down and put his face in his hands.

"Shit, man." He mumbled.

"Here, eat and drink." Polly instructed, shoving a sandwich and water bottle in front of him. He thanked her and did as she was told. Axel, surprisingly quiet, helped him back to their room but left him alone.

In the main room, Brittany had taken it upon herself to take Tyler from Kali, who had a little bit of dried blood on her mouth, that Shawn cleaned up for her. Tyler calmed down pretty quickly once Brittany had him, and ended up falling asleep after she managed to give him some water.

"We need to take him and get him some clothes and stuff." She said eventually, once everyone had quieted down from asking Kali and Catherine questions.

"I'll talk to dad or something." Mack said, flipping through a magazine.

"I'm gonna go check on Mike." CeCe said, and not even five minutes later, they heard her yell, "Mike! Mike! Stop, everything's on *fire*!"

Monday, January 26, 1987

"So uh, we have a situation." Hopper said as soon as he and Polly appeared. Kali raised an eyebrow and he stepped aside to show a pissed off looking El, who had her arms crossed over her chest. Kali's eyes widened.

"Jane!"

"My name is El." El grumbled, hugging her back. "And you're lucky I love you because if not, I'd break your neck for this bullshit. You too." She looked at Hopper. "*And* my boyfriend. Where is he?"

"He's not speaking to Kali." Mack said. "She pulled some shit like a week ago and he didn't take it very well."

"Well, I guess when you kill over a hundred people at one time it'll do that. They did rescue a kid though." Axel said, shrugging.

"What?" El shrieked, causing a couple of the others to come into the main area, wondering what was going on.

"Mike didn't tell you?" Kali asked. El shook her head.

"He has a good reason not to." Polly said, shaking her head. "But you fucking blabbermouths." She walked off.

"Either explain what happened or take me to him." El demanded. Kali sighed and nodded.

"Stay here. Can you go get Mike, Axel?" She asked. Axel just walked off, giving a slight nod. "I'm gonna go practice. He won't come out if I'm out here." She gave El and Hopper a smile and nod and left as well. El looked at Hopper, who shrugged. A couple more came out and surrounded them.

"Who are you?" Nora asked.

"Who do you think, you shit?" Polly said, nudging her shoulder. Nora glared at her and then looked back to El.

"You're… El?" El nodded. Nora grinned. "Girl, that boy loves you to *death*." El grinned.

"Axel, I swear to *fuck*, if you don't quit pushing me I'm gonna fucking burn the piss out of you. *Stop*!" Mike grumbled. "God, I'm not in the mood for your shit today."

"When are you in the mood for anyone's shit?" John asked. Mike glared at him. Mike saw Hopper then, and instead of grinning at him like he usually does, he just stares at him. He hadn't seen El yet.

"Hey, Hop." Mike sighed.

"Kid." Hopper shook his head. He nodded towards El, who was just staring at Mike. Sure, she's watched him in the void nearly everyday, but seeing him in person just made her feel whole.

"Mike…" She whispered. His head snapped towards her and his eyes widened.

"El?" He couldn't believe it. She was standing there, in one of his old sweaters, blue jeans and converse, wearing a pink jacket over it. Her hair was below her shoulders, falling in ringlets. He took in her face, she looked older, filled out a little more,but just as beautiful as ever. He swallowed and his fingers twitched, like he wanted to reach out and touch her, but he was too far away. Everyone looked back and forth between them, waiting for who would react first. It was Mike. He took three long strides towards her and pulled her into his arms, literally picking her up and hugging her tightly, spinning her a little. She let out a breathy laugh and hugged him back just as tight. He put her down and pulled back a little, curling his fingers in her hair. She stared back up at him, her doe eyes watering. She pulled him down by the collar of his shirt and kissed him. Axel and Andi started wolf-whistling and cheering. Mike flipped them off but kissed her back. Hopper coughed and they pulled away, looking at him. He gave them a look and El glared at him.

"You lied to me about where you were going for almost a year, don't look at me like that." She hissed, putting her arms around Mike's waist and hugging him. He draped an arm around her and buried his face in her hair.

"I know, I'm sorry. You know I'd have brought you everytime kid, but it'd have been suspicious." She gave him a look.

"There's literally nothing going on in Hawkins, or Chicago for that matter."

"There is in Texas." Mack muttered. El looked at her and then at Mike when he tensed up.

"Can someone explain what the hell's going on?" Hopper asked. "And dear God, why is there a half naked toddler running around." Mike looked up again then.

"Dammit." He muttered, letting go of El and running after Tyler. "Tyler! Get your little ass back here!" El made a face and looked at them.

"He's been taking care of him this week since the rest of us don't know how to take care of children younger than fourteen." Ender

explained.

"It's not that hard." Hopper said.

"It is when they fucking run from you." Mike said a minute later, coming back with Tyler on one hip, a shirt across his other shoulder.

"I've got him, Mike, go take a chill pill." Brittany said and Mike glared at her, but handed him over. He looked at Hopper and El and ran a hand through his hair.

"Fuck, I don't know what to do." He said. He let out a breathy laugh and walked towards El, running his fingers through her hair. "It's so long and pretty… You're pretty. Beautiful." She blushed and looked down. He smiled slightly, but felt his eyes watering. "I missed you to much, El." He whispered. She reached up and put her hands on either side of his face.

"I missed you too. Don't cry." She whispered back, wiping at a tear. The others left, all except for Hopper (obviously), Ender, and Catherine. "I didn't think you'd cry if you saw me."

"I'm happy, I am… I just… I did something you'll probably hate me for." She raised an eyebrow but shook her head.

"I could never hate you, Mike."

"I killed people." He managed to whisper, sniffling and looking anywhere but her face. "Kali didn't *make* me, but she *wanted* me to and I did and…"

"Mike, hush." She gave Hopper a look and he nodded, walking away and ushering the other two with him. "Come on." She said, letting her hands fall and catch his hands in hers. She pulled him over to a couch and she sat in his lap, pulling him in for another hug. "Have you forgotten that I've killed too?" She asked. He shook his head.

"But-"

"Mike, I don't agree with whatever Kali's doing, which someone really needs to explain, by the way, but the people I killed didn't deserve to die, they did deserve to suffer the way I did, and those other

experiments did. They should be treated how we were."

"I burned them alive." He said, looking at his hands. She grabbed them and squeezed gently. "They weren't *doing* anything, just doing their jobs and I *killed* them."

"And I squeezed their brains and made them bleed out their eyes, nose, mouths and ears." She shrugged a little. "I snapped their necks. I'm not saying it's right to kill, it never is. This isn't an eye for an eye type of thing, it's more like an eye for a life. Literally and figuratively. And they were doing their jobs too. They were basically brainwashed into trying to get me and hurt me, and I killed them. I have regret, Mike, and it's a part of life, in this case, literally. You did what you had to do when you were doing whatever it was, and I *don't* hate you for it." Mike stared at her, eyes glistening. He still felt so horrible for what he did, and what he'll *do*, but he was amazed at her speaking skills. Even before he went missing, she never said this much at once, and he was proud.

"I've never heard you say so much." He said, finally. She snorted and rolled her eyes fondly.

"Of course, I give you a mini speech and you say *that*."

This'll be continued in the next chapter and there'll probably be another time skip.

8. Chapter 8

There's a perfectly reasonable explanation for as to why Kali is acting this way, but you'll have to wait a couple more chapters to find out ;)

"Mike is surprisingly good at throwing knives." Shawn said, walking into the main room. "Hey El, hey Hop. Just thought I'd mention that." He continued on towards his room. El looked at Mike, who shrugged.

"Tannern got me into it."

"He's the one with the time thing, right?" She asked. He nodded.

"The one that reminds me of Will, quiet."

"Who's the one that reminds you of Max?"

"Andi." He told her, playing with a piece of hair. They were curled up on the couch together. "They'd be good friends, I think. Love to make fun of me." El snorted and Hopper tried to cover up one.

"What about Lucas? Does any of them remind you of him?"

"Hm… probably Mack, a little. Remember how Lucas didn't trust you at first?" She nodded. "She didn't trust us either. She's a good person though, when she's not in a bad mood." She snorted.

"Axel's the Dustin, right?" Mike scoffed.

"Worse." She grinned.

"Any that remind you of me?" She asked, looking at him. He shook his head immediately.

"There's only one you." He said quietly. "No one can ever replace you."

"The lab can!" Axel yelled at the top of his lungs, scaring them.

"Excuse me?" Mike sighed.

"Axel, go gather everyone." He said. "I want to explain *everything* to El and Hopper that we know about the labs."

Five minutes later, everyone was sitting in the classroom, Hopper sitting on the front desk and everyone else in the seats. Kali stood next to Hopper, glancing at Mike and El every couple seconds.

"So why are we all here? Is this an intervention or something?" Ender asked. Mike rolled his eyes and shook his head.

"No, we're here to talk about the labs." He said. He waited a couple seconds before continuing, "Each of us, well, minus me I guess, were *technically* replacement experiments in the eyes of the lab. When one experiment dies or escapes, the lab hunts down other people like us, with the same powers, and gives them the same number." El made a face. "Yeah, it doesn't make sense to me either. Anyways, that's what Axel meant when he said the lab can replace you."

"Huh." She nodded.

"Do you two have any questions about anything, before we continue?" Shawn asked.

"I want to know what Kali asked Mike to do." El said, narrowing her eyes at her. "And I want *her* to tell me." It was silent, as the two girls stared at each other. Finally, Kali broke it, and said,

"We found out about another lab, with another experiment, Tyler, who was number seventeen. And I asked him to burn it down. I wanted to destroy every single bit of information in the lab." She told her everything she told Mike.

"Killing the people inside is *closure* for you?" El asked. Kali nodded. "You know, this kind of reminds me from when you wanted me to kill that man, for revenge."

"This is different."

"How?"

"You didn't kill him."

"What the *fuck*, Kali? Is everything based on murder to you? You forced him to kill hundreds of people!"

"I didn't force him. He didn't have to do it." Mike snorted.

"If I hadn't done it, what would you have done, Kali? Got someone else to do it. Don't put the blame on me. I didn't want to do it, but I did it for you, and for Tyler. You say they deserve it for what they did, and what they didn't try to do, as in stop the bullshit these Projects were doing. You're right, they deserved a lot, but they didn't deserve to be killed."

"It's too late now." Kali shrugged. Mike stared at her, and stood up so quick the chair he'd been sitting in hit the wall a couple feet away.

"What the fuck is wrong with you? You're *insane*! You have no remorse for anything, do you? You know, if I had been killed the day I escaped, I wouldn't be here to burn those fucking labs down. I wouldn't be able to kill those people, and save those kids."

"What are you talking about? They weren't going to kill you." She made a face.

"They had a goddamn gun to my head, Kali! They were going to shoot me!" He walked closer to her, fists clenched. "You'd have cared then, wouldn't you, if I had died."

"When was this?" She looked genuinely confused. He glared at her, but then he noticed her eyes, they were clouded over a little, like she couldn't focus.

"She's confused." Shawn said. "She doesn't know what you're talking about, Mike."

"What the hell." He whispered. He looked at Shawn. "Get her out of here." He said, finally.

"Why-?"

"Just get her out. Take her to your room, lock the door, and come

back." Shawn looked outright confused but did what he asked and came back a minute or two later.

"What is it, Mike?"

"Do any of you know if she's hit her head or done anything that could make her forget?" He asked. They all shook her head. "Either something's going on in here," He pointed at his own head, "Or she's really insane. And Shawn, she told me there were three labs. My first day here, I was told there were eight. What's the deal? Are these new ones or ones that have been up and running?"

"They have been." Shawn told him.

"And the other five aren't?" Hopper asked.

"The one I was in completely shut down." Mack said.

"You're sure?" He asked. She nodded.

"I buried the one I was in." Brittany said. "Made it where no one could get in or out."

"That's two, what about the other three."

"One of them is Hawkins lab, right?" El asked. Mike nodded. "That's three, two more."

"We're not sure where those are. My dad thinks that those two are the ones where the Projects are."

"This shit just doesn't line up." Hopper said, furrowing his brows. Mike scoffed.

"I don't remember the last time anything *did.* I mean, there's a fucking other dimension, there are *monsters*, there are people with legitimate powers, that I used to read about in comics. None of it lines up. Why is this stuff happening? *How* is it possible?"

"That was the point of the labs." A new voice announced. Everyone turned towards the door and saw Asher standing there, leaning against the frame. "That's how it started, actually. The first

pyrokinetic person wasn't how the labs figured out about people like you kids. The first person to ever be *discovered* was a telekinetic, like Eleven."

"El." Mike corrected immediately.

"Sorry, El. It's nice to meet you by the way, I'm Asher, Mack's dad." El gave a tiny wave.

"How do you know this?" She asked, raising her brows.

"I worked at the lab Mack was in." He said. Her eyes widened. "I don't work for them at all anymore, but I've got an inside man. The labs were trying to figure out how this was possible, the Projects were what started it all, after the man burned down that town. And that's what it started off as, running a few tests to those we knew had powers to try and figure out how and why they could do this. But when Brenner came around, he made everything worse. He's the reason children are kidnapped and *raised*, if you could call it that, in these labs the way they were. Forced to use their powers until they couldn't anymore, or until they died. I guarantee, if El hadn't gotten out of the lab when she did, she'd probably be dead right now and there would be a new experiment eleven." No one said anything for a minute or two, and Hopper spoke up.

"What do you mean *he's the reason*? Don't you mean he *was* the reason?" He asked. Asher shook his head.

"No, Martin Brenner is very much alive. And he's the leader of the Projects."

9. Chapter 9

We've got some bonding moments, a secret is spilled, and everyone's having a good time, for now.

Also, for those who are confused with the Projects and the labs, I hope this clears it up! :)

Saturday, April 18, 1987

The last two and a half months have been… something. After it was revealed that Brenner was alive, El decided that she was going to stay every single weekend at the bunker, whether or not Hopper and Mike liked it. And with a good bit of arguing, she got what she wanted, and stayed at the bunker every weekend, getting to know everyone. When the Party began getting suspicious, she told them that she was spending her weekends with her mom and Becky, and they believed her.

She'd also been helping them plan out the next mission, which would take place mid October (yeah, this one would take *a lot* of planning), which Mike wasn't looking forward to, but then again, who would be? Asher had explained to her and Hopper both the history of the labs and the Projects, which had royally confused El, as she had thought the labs were against the Projects, but were actually alianced, considering the Projects are the *reason* for the labs in the first place. They created them.

"I thought these people were supposed to be smart." She'd said to Mike afterwards, talking about the history, along with the weird number thing. He'd shrugged and said,

"That's what I'm saying. That, or Brenner got seriously fucked up- even more fucked up than we thought- in the head when this first started out."

She still didn't completely understand, and Asher was honest with her, he didn't either. Everything about the Projects was weird, they didn't really know what they were doing. All they were good at was

kidnapping, torturing, and killing children or people who got in their way. Or, at least, hiring people who did that instead of their actual *job*, which was to figure out where the powers came from, how you were born with it, if it was genetics, some sort of birth defect, or a result from the experiments their mothers may have participated in. Asher had an answer for that as well.

"I don't think the abilities are from that." He'd told them back in January, once Mike had calmed El down from her freak out (she definitely would've busted some windows if there had been some). "I think that with El, yes- and Polly- the experiments their mothers participated in might have given them the powers, but like I said, no one is completely sure. As for the rest of you, there are no records of your mothers doing that, so us scientists and doctors can only come up with genetics and/or some sort of birth defect."

"How would this be a birth defect?" Mike asked, holding up a hand as the flames danced across his palm. "A birth defect would be what Dustin has. Cleidocranial dysplasia, which honestly, makes him cooler if you ask me."

"Alright, Mr. Smarty-Pants, I'm pretty sure you didn't go to college to become a scientist like I did." Asher told flipped him off.

"I wanted to." He muttered. Asher didn't say anything for a second, but continued, making a mental note to go back and talk to Mike about that.

"You're right, Mike. I want to meet this friend of yours, by the way, he *seems* cool."

"How do you people manage to get so off track with serious shit?" Hopper asked, exasperated. Mike shrugged innocently.

"And with genetics, wouldn't a parent have to have an ability too?" Mike continued. "Because I'm *pretty* sure that neither of them do."

"It could run in the family somewhere." Asher told him.

"So, theoretically, I could be related to that guy who burned down the town?"

"Unlikely, but it could be possible."

"Well fuck."

There'd been even more sciency talk that El hadn't understood, though she continued listening, smiling when Mike explained a word she didn't know (she knows a lot by now, but she's still learning).

And today, Mike was *helping her with her tenth grade math homework*, despite not being in school for way over a year.

"How are you so smart." She grumbled, writing the answer to a problem. He shrugged.

"I mean, it's not like I quit with school all together after everything. I'm still learning too."

"Yeah, but you were already like, two freaking years ahead back then." He chuckled and shrugged again.

"I don't know, but it sure isn't *genetics*." He joked. She giggled.

Kali walked in, quietly, and joined them at their shared desk. After what happened in January, the three had talked privately, and Kali had apologized, stating that she didn't remember anything from the last month. She'd just remembered organizing the mission, *only* to get the kid out, not burn it down. She had no idea where that had come from, or why Mike was so pissed at her when the two had been getting along *great.* Everyone had been confused, wondering how the hell she'd managed to forget everything like that, but Asher had his suspicions. Doesn't mean he told them though.

That's also why the next mission is going to take so long, Kali won't be going with them, so they had to plan out every little thing, how to get in, get the next kid, and get back out without getting killed, which was a pain in the ass if you ask them. Kali wouldn't be there to hide them this time, so it'd take longer to get in and out.

"How's it going in here?" She asked after a few minutes. El jumped a little and Mike chuckled, glancing up at Kali for a second.

"El's getting on my ass about knowing how to do tenth grade math."

Kali chuckled when El gave him a glare and flicked him on the head. "Hey!" He pouted and she rolled her eyes.

"Hey Mike?" CeCe called from the doorway. He turned and looked her way.

"Yeah?"

"Can I talk to you for a minute?" He nodded and kissed El's cheek.

"I'll be back soon." He told her, and stood up. From where she was sitting, she had to literally lean back and crane her neck to get a good look at him. He'd passed six feet about a week ago and she couldn't believe it. Neither could Hopper, as Mike was well on his way to being able to stare Hopper directly in the face. He let CeCe lead him to the training room, where no one currently was, and she shut and locked the door. "That's not suspicious at all." She'd have laughed any other time.

"Um, I need to tell you something." She said, biting her lip.

"Okay."

"So, um, I told Andi back in January that I would talk to you, and here we are, like four months later, and I'm just now doing it." She ran a hand through her hair, fingers catching at the end. Mike stayed silent, patient, as she attempted to form her words. "See, there's something about me that only she knows, and she's been trying to convince me to tell everyone else about it and… it's hard, you know? Uh… we made a pact, that if I told everyone about me, she'd talk to Axel." Mike nodded, just about everyone knew about Andi's crush on Axel at this point. "I'm just gonna say it… I… I like girls. Holy shit, I actually said it." She slapped a hand to her forehead and stared at Mike, bug eyed, waiting for his reaction.

"Okay." He said, shrugging simply. She blinked.

"Okay?" He nodded, giving her a smile.

"There's nothing wrong with that." He said, shrugging. "You love who you love, whether they're male or female."

"Huh." She dropped her hand.

"And it's who you are, CeCe. You like girls? Cool. Girls are good. Girls make the world go 'round. I like 'em too." She giggled at that, eyes beginning to water. "If you like boys, that's fine too. Boys have a bit of a hand making the world go 'round, but ya know, girls are better." She full on laughed this time, wiping under her eyes and holding her arms out to him. He took a step forward and hugged her.

"Thanks, Mike."

"No problem. If you ever need to talk, I'm here. And I know that everyone else will accept you for who you are, okay? There's no need to worry about that. Sure, there are a lot of people out in the real world that don't, but fuck them."

"I knew you were my favorite for a reason." He chuckled.

"Petty sure I'm not your favorite." He said, and the way he said it made her pull away slightly, and look up at him accusingly.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"What do you *think* it means?" She stared at him for a minute, his eyes twinkling, his lips twitching, trying to keep from smiling.

"You know something I don't, don't you?"

"I plead the fifth."

10. Chapter 10

The next time I update this I will officially be an aunt! Not long now guys, less than a month and my niece will be here!

Sorry for the wait, I've been working on other stuff and had writers block for this, so sorry about that! Hopefully it won't take another month (give or take a few days) for the next one.

Thursday, June 4,1987

El sighed, flipping through her magazine. She was sitting at Benny's old diner, waiting on the rest of the party. She had a surprise for them, that involved Mike- she'd had the *same* surprise for the Wheelers and they'd been happier than she's ever seen them. She'd been sitting there for ten minutes when she heard the bell above the door ding, and she looked up, expecting it to be them, but it was just Troy. She rolled her eyes and went back to her magazine. About a minute later, she heard some rustling coming from across from her and looked up. Her mood turned sour almost immediately; Troy.

"What do you want, Troy?"

"How about a date?" He asked, smirking. She stared at him blankly. "How's 'bout it, Hopper?"

"Fuck off, you inconsiderate dickhead." She promptly stood up and made to walk away but she felt his hand grab her wrist and he pulled her close to him.

"C'mon, we all know Wheeler's not coming back. Besides, you're better off without him-" Whatever he was gonna say next was interrupted by a punch to the face.

"I *loved* him!" She yelled, and everyone in the restaurant turned to look at them. "I will *always* love him you sorry piece of shit! He's gonna come back, I *promise* you he will. Don't you *ever* fucking touch me again or you'll have to answer to my father." She turned on her heel, smacking him in the face with her ponytail, and walked out,

seething. She stormed down the street, and saw the rest of the Party making their way towards her. She walked faster.

"El? I thought we were meeting you at-" Lucas started, but she interrupted him.

"Not anymore. Follow me." She growled, continuing down the street.

Goddammit Mike I almost killed Troy just now. I wanted to.

What did he do?!

He asked me out. I told him to fuck off, and he said that you were never coming back and that I was better off without you and I punched him. I hate him, Mike. I wish school was already over with so you could come back.

I'm sorry, baby. When I get back, I'll be sure to beat his ass too. I'm glad you punched him, because I'd have done it in a heartbeat too. He's just a inconsiderate asshole.

That's what I called him. But I said dickhead.

That's my girl.

El couldn't help but smile a little at that.

I can't wait to come this weekend.

I can't wait for you to come! Is Hopper coming or just you?

Just me, I think. He's got some other thing he's gotta do, I think. He didn't tell me what, though.

Huh, mysterious. Are we still doing the thing?

Yeah, I'm taking them to the junkyard now.

Okay. Let me know when to get the supercom, Axel needs to talk to me about only God knows what.

Ha, have fun with that. I'll talk to you in a bit.

Okay, love you.

Love you too.

"Yo, Ellie, you with us?" Dustin asked, waving a hand in front of her face. "You went from looking like you were about to commit murder to that dopey ass look you have when you're talking to Mike." She flipped him off.

"That's exactly what happened." She said.

"You were about to commit murder?" Lucas squeaked.

"I wanted to." She told them what happened at Benny's and Max almost immediately went to turn around but El stopped her. "I already punched him in the face so just leave it alone."

"Just wait until school starts back." She growled, crossing her arms.

"On that note…" El shrugged a little. "I still have something to show you guys. Come on." She continued towards the junkyard, and when they got there, Will asked,

"This is the junkyard."

"Yeah, it is." She nodded.

"Why are we at the junkyard?" Lucas asked.

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, there was a loud rattling coming from inside the bus. Dustin shrieked and automatically hid behind El, having to crouch as he was a lot taller now. She giggled and opened the doors, and two people walked out. Dustin peered out from behind El, only to find something- no, someone- that wasn't scary at all. Two girls, and the one he couldn't take his eyes off's hair was flowing slightly in the wind, and he could see her green eyes clearly, though they were a couple yards apart.

"Holy…" He muttered, standing up straight and stepping from behind El with a cough. El raised an eyebrow at him.

The rest of the party were surprised at the other one, not minding the

one Dustin was fascinated with. She towered over all of them, and was smirking at the look of awe on their faces.

"Guys, this is Catherine and Polly, they're from the bunker."

"Wha- uh...Who? W-why… are they… here?" Dustin managed to get out, his voice an octave higher. Lucas started laughing and Max snorted so hard it hurt.

"I have the ability to teleport." Polly said.

"And I have healing abilities and can amplify others powers." Catherine told them.

"Even her voice is beautiful." Dustin whispered to himself, and only Will heard him. He nudged Dustin in the side and smirked.

"Why are you two here?" Max asked.

"Let's sit in the shade and I'll explain." El told them. El had to grab Dustin by the wrist and drag him with her to get him to move. El looked at Max and the two rolled their eyes. Sitting on the grass, El made sure Dustin was sitting across from Catherine.

Oh Miiike! Looks like our little Dusty is in looooove!

What?

He can't stop staring at Catherine.

Oh jeez

El chuckled and looked at her friends.

"So… Everyday since I came back in '84 I've been practicing my powers. I've gotten stronger, which you guys know, but do you remember how I could extend the range of the supercoms while talking to Mike from the cabin?" They nodded. "Well, we've tested it, Polly and I, and I can go until a little over halfway to Chicago. She's teleported to different places until I can't reach her anymore."

"Okay…?" Max said, confused.

"I grabbed Mike's supercom a while back, when Kali called and told me she was sending someone to get it. That's when we decided to try this." She didn't want to lie to them, but it was to keep them safe. She's all for them going to the bunker, but Kali was *not*. Mike wasn't as worried about it as he'd been, seeing that Polly, Ender or CeCe could teleport, it was much safer as if anyone from the Projects were to see them, they wouldn't be able to follow them. But Kali had to be complicated and she was the *boss*.

"We get to talk to Mike?" Dustin asked, excited. "Like really talk to him? Not through you?"

"I mean it's technically through her, as she's using her powers. Just in a different way." Catherine said. He stared at her for a couple seconds and she smiled at him. He smiled nervously back. It took everything in Max and Lucas to not start laughing again.

"Yeah. Are we ready?" El asked. Catherine nodded and scooted closer to her, putting a hand over her shoulder. El closed her eyes for several minutes, and to everyone's surprise, no blood came out of her nose. She opened her eyes, sniffed a little and made a face. She brought her supercom up to her face and pressed the button. "Mike, are you there? Over." She grinned at Dustin who was bouncing up and down as much as he could since he was sitting down.

"Yeah, I'm here. Over."

"That is *not* Mike!" Max exclaimed, smacking Lucas' leg for effect.

"It is." El laughed and Catherine and Polly nodded.

"His voice got deep!" She shrieked, making grabby hands for the supercom. El handed it to her.

"Wheeler! There is no fucking way this is you. What's something only you and I know?" She waited a second and said meekly, "Over."

"Well, one time when were were going to see El, you were skating beside me and ended up falling, and you laid there for like five minutes laughing at how worried I got, over."

"Holy shit." She whispered. "How is your voice so deep? Over."

"Puberty." Mike laughed. "Over." Dustin snatched it away from her.

"Mike?" He asked, timidly.

"Hi Dustin." They could hear the smile in his voice.

"Mike! Dude! I miss you! Over." He shouted excitedly.

"I miss you too, man, but damn that was loud." Mike laughed. "Over."

"Sorry." Dustin said sheepishly. "Over."

"Why do they say over?" Catherine whispered to El as the rest of the party talked happily with Mike.

"It's so they know they're done talking, is all. They've always done it."

"Huh." She nodded. "Is he single?" She whispered so quietly, El barely heard her. She eyed Dustin and Catherine nodded.

"He is." She giggled. Dustin glanced back at them with a grin and then went back to talking about the gigantic campaign Mike was telling them about. "He's in love with you already." El told her. Catherine rolled her eyes.

"Doubt he even likes me." El rolled her eyes this time.

"Sure."

"I'm sooo gonna keep nagging Kali about letting them come to the bunker." She sighed. "I wanna see him again."

"I mean, you'll see him again next time you guys come out."

"True, but you know what I mean." She gave her a knowing look and El sighed, nodding."

"I hate lying to them." She whispered.

"I know. Hopefully Kali will let them come before the next mission." El nodded.

"Dammit, I'll be right back. The kid is running around naked again.

Over." Mike said.

"The kid?" Will asked. Mike didn't answer, instead, a new voice did.

"Yeah we rescued a kid a couple months ago. He's like four and loves being naked. His names Tyler, cute as a button. Mike takes care of him." No one replied for a few seconds. "Uh, hello?"

"You're supposed to say over when you're done talking." Will explained. "Over."

"Oh. Over."

"Who are you?" Max asked.

"It's Mack, duh." She said like it was obvious. "Over."

"Oh, sorry, we haven't heard your voice in over a year so that's our bad." Max retorted. "Over." Mack laughed.

"True- Mike! Stop throwing knives at Axel dammit!" Everyone made a face.

"Oh yeah, Mike's good at throwing knives." Polly told them. "Tannern taught him. He picked up pretty quick and now he hits his target every time, perfectly."

"Mike?" Lucas asked. "How can he throw knives but not walk in a straight line?"

"Hey!" Mike yelled. "I'll have you know I'm *great* at throwing knives and can walk in a straight line now. Over." El snorted and took the supercom.

"No you can't. Don't try to fool them."

"How do you know?" Max asked, raising an eyebrow.

"The void?" She replied, shrugging.

"Oh. Right. Dude that's creepy." Max made a face. The she smirked. "Have you ever sneaked on him mas-"

"Shut up Max!" El threw a small rock at her. Mike was too busy laughing on his end. "I'll have you know I have not!"

"You guys, I swear." Will shook his head.

"He just listens to his walkman and tries to dance." Catherine said. "He's a terrible dancer."

"Everyone knows that, Catherine." Mike retorted. "You're not much better. Over."

"So? I still dance. Over."

"So do I, obviously. Anyways, El! Baby, are you *sure* that you haven't sneaked on me doing anything? Over."

"Positive, Michael. If I did, you'd be sure to know. Over."

"Oh? Over." El giggled.

"Shut up." She glanced at Catherine and saw her wiping her nose. "We should probably go, Catherine's nose is starting to bleed. Over."

"Yeah." Mike sighed sadly. "Guys! We're gonna start doing this monthly but I'm working on trying to convince Kali to let you guys come one day. There's literally the safest plan but she's stubborn. Over."

"Awe, okay. She'd better agree because it's still weird not seeing you everyday. Over." Dustin said.

"I'm working on it! I love you guys. Over."

"We love you too." They chorused. "Bye! Over."

"Bye guys. Over and out."

11. Stranger Things Levoes

GUYS! I got nominated for the Levoes again! Phenomenal Mutiny has two nominations, one for Best OC Story and the other is Best Sci-Fi, Drama, Or Suspense Story! Phieilly is also nominated for her story in that category for Visage of Lost Love so congrats to that girl!

12. Chapter 11

Hahahaha well...

Here we are. A month and a half later. My niece is a little over a month now... I got *that* part right, at least. Phieilly found a video on how to get rid of writer's block and frankly... it worked pretty well, so I will be watching it on repeat for the next like... 84 years.

I really am sorry for taking so long. No promises for when the next update is, but as of right now there isn't much action, but that'll be happening soon, so enjoy the happiness and new relationships while you can.

This is VERY short but rest assured you'll have another chapter this week. I promise!

Wednesday, August 12, 1987

"I can't get over how *cute* she is." Ender whined, spinning in her rolling chair as she rolled into Mike and Axel's room. Mike raised an eyebrow as he looked at her.

"May I ask- who is so cute?"

"Starts with a C and ends with an E."

"You know damn well there are two girls whose names start and end with those letters."

"Like you don't already know anyways." She glared at him.

"Of course I know, it's all you ever talk about. I also don't understand why you come to *me* for this stuff."

"As if I'm about to go to Kali about this. She'd just be like *that's nice* and tell me to go practice shooting." He snorted.

"True."

"And as far as I know, literally no one else except you have dated. And you're still in a relationship."

"I plan to be in this one for as long as I live. So, what's up?" He put the notebook he'd been writing in down and she stopped spinning.

"She's *so cute*. We went shopping earlier with Mack and Cath- who wouldn't shut the hell up about your friend, by the way- and the way she looked at some of the clothes? God I can't handle it." She sighed. "Have you ever felt like that with El?"

"God yes." He nodded. "Every time I look at her I feel like I'm gonna implode." She chuckled.

"How do I stop this madness?"

"So dramatic." He muttered. "Hm… lemme guess, tell her?" She snorted.

"As if I'd ever do that."

"Oblivious asses." He shook his head.

"Who?"

"The both of you." She stared at him and he stared back.

"Are you saying-"

"You didn't hear it from me. She's not ready to tell everyone yet."

"I freaking love you, Mike." He made a face. "As a brother, of *course*." He snorted and waved her off.

"Now go daydream somewhere else. I'm trying to do school, here."

"Nerd." She took it upon herself and rolled our, shutting the door behind her as he snickered.

"Why the hell are you rolling around everywhere, E?" CeCe asked. Ender looked at her with a sly grin.

"Because I *can*."

"Have fun with that." She snickered and continued her way down the hall.

Meanwhile, Catherine and Nora were avidly trying to convince Kali to let the Party comve for a visit.

"Oh come *on* Kali. It doesn't have to be every weekend like El! I bet they'd be happy with once a month!" Catherine said.

"You say that because you're obsessed with Justin." Kali replied.

"It's Dustin." She pouted. "And no I'm not!"

Despite only seeing each other two more times since their first encounter, the two had nearly talked each other to death and had raging crushes on one another.

"Anyways," Nora rolled her eyes. "Just imagine how happy it would make Mike and El… and Cath."

"I'll think about it."

"You've been thinking about it for what? Like a year and a half at this point! You've had plenty of time. And after what happened when you rescued Tyler, I think you owe him that much."

"He should be happy that I'm allowing El to come."

"Allowing El to come my ass." Mack walked in, rolling her eyes. "El could come her telekinetic little ass here anytime she wants to."

"You have no say in what El is *allowed* to do. That's Hopper's job." Catherine said, crossing her arms. "Albeit she doesn't always… listen to him." Kali sighed.

"We'll see. I'll talk to Mike later when he's finished his work for the day." The two squealed happily and Kali cringed, giving them a look before walking off towards the training room. They high fived and went to the main room to watch some movies- that Mike had so happily recommended to them, and Polly had gone to the video store to *rent* them. Lot's of them.

Hawkins

"Jane Eleanor Hopper." Dustin stated, walking into the house. She jumped and looked at him.

"Have you ever heard of knocking?"

"Yes, and I am very aware of what knocking is but I'm also a little angry with you."

"What'd I do?"

"I saw your aunt yesterday."

"Okay."

"You know, when my mom and I went to Chicago to visit a family member? She was in the city, at the same restaurant we went to."

"And? Did you speak to her?" She asked, tilting her head.

"As a matter of fact, I did." He sat on the armchair across from her. "And you know, I found out something."

"What's that?"

"That you haven't exactly… told us the truth. Friends don't lie, that ring a bell?" She raised an eyebrow and nodded.

"What are you talking about, Dustin?"

"I asked how your visits had been going, and she told me that the few times she's seen you over the last few months went pretty well. I said few? And she told me she'd only seen you a handful times this year alone."

"Uh huh." El made a mental note to call Becky later and have a chat with her.

"So you haven't been one hundred percent truthful. Where've you been going every weekend, El?"

"Um…" She bit her lip. "You probably know."

"You've been going to see Mike, haven't you?" He asked, a frown on his face. She nodded.

"Look, I… I'm sorry I didn't tell you guys. I haven't been going very long, not this whole time, I promise. *Dad* was going once a month for visits and he would take stuff with him and I put two and two together… I also heard him on the phone with Kali one night and I told him that I knew and made him take me with him. Kali is *relentless*. We've *all* been trying to convince her to let you guys come but she won't budge." She said sadly. "Please don't be mad at me."

"I'm not mad, El. I wish you'd have told us, though. I can't say the same for Max and Lucas when they find out- don't look at me like that, you're definitely telling them. Or I will. It's your funeral- but I don't think Will will be upset about it." She sighed.

"I'll tell them… tomorrow. Please be with me when I do because you *know* Lucas will be pissed."

"I'm well aware of that. Of course I'll be with you. If a party member requires assistance, I will always be there."

Friday, August 14, 1987

They were correct, and Lucas was pissed. Or, a better word would probably be furious. Just a little. He went an entire day and a half without speaking to El, but finally apologized for being a dick when Max smacked him for being one. El had apologized to all of them hundreds of times, it seemed like, and when they were at the Byers/ Hoppers house for a weekend sleepover, El told Mike they found out and decided to stay in Hawkins with them this weekend- just imagine how hard *that* was to get permission for- they all got their wish.

They were in the middle of watching Ghostbusters when Mike yelled in El's head.

EL!

"Holy shit." She yelped and everyone looked at her weird. "Sorry, Mike just yelled in my head."

I didn't mean to scare you, sorry.

It's okay. What is it?

Kali finally agreed to let them come!

No way.

Yes! I don't know why, but she just randomly came and talked to me about it the other day and confirmed it a few minutes ago.

Mike, oh my God, do you know how happy they're gonna be?

I'm *happy! Tell them!*

Okay!

"Guys." El grinned. Will paused the movie and they turned to her. "I have awesome news."

"You're pregnant."

"What the *fuck* Max?" El smacked her with a pillow and she cackled.

"Kidding!"

"You guys are allowed to go see Mike." They stared at her.

"You're shitting me." Lucas deadpanned.

"Nope! He just told me."

"When?" Dustin asked excitedly, bouncing up and down.

"Wait, lemme ask him."

Mike, you still there?

Yes!

Do you know when?

Uh, when does school start?

Wednesday.

In the middle of the week?

Yeah, it's weird.

Huh. Anyways, do you think they'd be up to coming like, tomorrow? And maybe stay the weekend?

I'll ask.

"Do you want to go tomorrow? For the weekend." She got a chorus of screams as a response.

"YES!"

"FUCK YEAH!"

"TELL MIKE I'LL SEE HIM TOMORROW!"

"OH MY GOD!"

"YAY!"

"Did you just say yay?" Lucas made a face at Max. She flipped him off.

"Yes, yes I did."

13. Chapter 12

Emma: I don't plan to stop anytime soon! :D

"If you little shits don't calm the hell down, I'm gonna turn this car around."

"I don't understand why *Steve* of all people had to drive us." El grumbled.

"Because your dad's sick and he asked me to take you because he doesn't trust you little shits."

"You sound just like Mrs. Byers." Dustin quipped. "An overprotective and over dramatic mother." Almost immediately after, Steve stopped the car and put it in park, looking at the four squished in the back seat. El turned around to look at them.

"Why are we stopped?" Max asked.

"You're not literally turning around, are you?" Dustin asked nervously.

"We're here, dipshit."

"We're on a back road surrounded by trees. How are we there?" Lucas asked. El rolled her eyes.

"Come on."

"I'll see you shits bright and early on Monday morning!"

"You're not staying?" Will asked confused.

"I would love to, honestly." He sighed. "But I have to get back. I'll try and see him sometime on Monday, okay? You guys be careful and make fun of him for me." They all waved goodbye and then stared at El expectantly. She looked both ways to make sure no one was around, and skipped across the road and into the woods. The four looked at each other and Max shrugged, and they followed her. Ten

minutes later, they reached a clearing where two people stood. Polly and a girl with brown hair.

"Hey guys!" Polly waved. They waved back.

"This is CeCe." El introduced, and they greeted them.

"Lemme guess...you're Max, obviously," CeCe grinned at her. "You're Lucas, Will and… Dustin. Catherine won't shut up about you." Dustin blushed.

"So, let's get down there, yeah? Mike's in the training room trying to get out all his energy. He's excited." Polly told them.

"How, exactly, is he getting out that energy?" El asked, narrowing her eyes slightly.

"Um, throwing knives at Axel, probably. Or wrestling with Andi." CeCe shrugged.

"Okay…" El made a face.

"Okay, El, Max and Lucas can come with me and CeCe will take you two." Polly told them, and they nodded. Seconds later, they were in the middle of a training room, a screaming Axel running past them.

"Why couldn't I have powers that are useful!" He shrieked, hiding behind El. She glared at him and then sighed, looking at Mike, who had a knife in hand, prepared to throw it- and *obviously* miss him.

"What have I told you about throwing knives at Axel?" She said, crossing her arms.

"Um. Not to?" He looked behind her and dropped the knife, gasping slightly in shock at who was behind her, as if he'd forgotten they were coming. The four were staring at him wide eyed, Max and Dustin wearing matching grins.

"Michael Giraffe Wheeler." Lucas sighed.

"Lucas Not-So-Tall-Giraffe Sinclair." Lucas snorted and Dustin took that as his cue to practically tackle Mike in a hug, squeezing him

tight and nearly picking him up.

"Holy shit, Dustin!" Mike laughed, hugging him back just as tight. "Uh, dude, you can let me go any second now."

"Let me enjoy this, Michael." Dustin retorted. A minute later, Mike was practically *pounced* on by Max. As they reunited, Andi decided that today of all days was the day she would tell Axel how she felt, and she had Ender call him to her room. He ran in with a grin, but frowned on the look on her face. He tilted his head to the side a little.

"What's up, buttercup?"

"Can you shut the door?" She asked. He nodded and did as she asked, before sitting next to her on the bed.

"What's wrong?"

"Um, nothing's wrong, I don't think." She sighed. "Just act like it's a bandaid." She muttered to herself. She looked at him, straight in the eye. "I like you." She said confidently. He raised an eyebrow too.

"I like you too. We knew this, though. If we didn't we wouldn't be friends-"

"No, Axel. I mean I like like you, if you will."

"Oh." He frowned. She sucked in a breath and nodded.

"I figured as much."

"Andi-"

"No, you don't have to say anything, okay? Let's just forget I said anything about it, okay?"

"No, listen." He put a hand on her shoulder and made her look at him. "I… It's not that I don't like you, okay? I love you, you're my best friend. I just… don't love you *like that.* I don't live *anyone* like that, not even like." She looked at him. "I, uh, I haven't told anyone, and I guess now is a good time as any." He took a deep breath. "I'm asexual."

"What… What does that mean?" She asked, confused.

"It means that I… don't really want a relationship,is the simplest way to put it. Not now, not in a couple years, never. I've never felt *attracted* to anyone, and it's not just because you guys are the only people I've really been around. You girls are gorgeous and you'd think I would like one of you, *like that*. But I don't."

"Oh."

"I understand if you're mad at me, for not telling you and not reciprocating the feelings, but it's just who I am."

"No, no, no, Axe, I couldn't be mad at you for that." She pulled him into a hug. "Like you said,it's who you are and you can't control that." They hugged for a long time before she pulled away, tucking some hair behind her ear. "Can we like… not be awkward or anything around each other? Or just forget what *I* said?"

"What did you say?" He asked, tilting his head to the side. She laughed and flicked his shoulder.

"Good job."

"Now, there's a certain *other* fiery red head just waiting to meet the hurricane named Andi." She made a face.

"Huh?"

"Mike's friends are here."

"Oh shit!" She exclaimed. "I forgot about that!" She got up and darted out of the room, and into the main area, where Mike was introducing everyone.

"And that annoying shithead is Andi." He called as she ran through.

"Fuck off, Wheeler." She flipped him off and zapped him slightly, causing his hair to poof out. He glared at her and flicked a spark at her. "Heyo, mysterious party members I know probably everything about! I'm Andi, I control the weather."

"You don't control the weather, Andi!" Shawn called.

"No one asked you." She called back. "Anyways, you're Lucas, Will, Dustin- Catherine won't shut up about you- and Max, it's nice to meet you all." She grinned at them.

"Uh, hi." Will said quietly.

"So you call Mike Wheeler too?" Max asked with a grin.

"I sure do. He called me shithead, I call him by his last name 'cause he hates it."

"Nice call."

"We're missing like… three people. Where the fuck is Kali, Ender and John?" Mike asked, confused.

"They went on a run with dad to get information on something." Mack told him.

"You don't know what?" Mike asked. She shook her head.

"You know them, secretive shits. Oh, hey Will." She waved. He blushed and waved back.

"Can we see you guys powers?" Dustin asked excitedly. They looked at Mike, who shrugged.

"Might as well, we can give them a tour as we go to the training room." He replied, grabbing El's hand and pulling her close to him. "Hey." He whispered, kissing her on the cheek. She smiled up at him.

"Ew, quit being gross." Dustin whined.

"Oh shut it." El did a motion with her hand and his hat flew off. Catherine picked it up from beside her and put it on with a cheeky grin.

"How do I look?" She asked.

"Uh, uh, uh-" Lucas elbowed him. "You look g-great with it on. Better

on you than me." He squeaked. She blushed and laughed. Mike pulled El along as he tried his best not to laugh. After giving them a tour, those with actual, visible powers showed them off. Brittany made the ground shake, John picked up some huge… thing that no one knew the thing of, but weighed a ton. Andi made it rain a little over their heads. Nora changed her features, which Lucas thought was amazing. Polly just teleported behind Will and scared him.

"I can teleport *and* fly. Anyone wanna take a flight with me?" CeCe asked.

"I do!" Max said excitedly. CeCe flew her around a little while she laughed. After she put Max down, it was Tannern's turn.

"Um, it's not very useful in most situations, but I can go back in time a few seconds, and forward in time, and stop time. I can look into your past if you wanted me to." He was very quiet. "Uh, this comes up when I do it." He moved his right hand in a circle and a green clock appeared. "If I turn it left, I reverse time, and right, I go forward. If I push it forward, I can stop time or go into someone's past."

"That's so cool." Dustin whispered.

"I can't really show mine." Catherine said, shrugging. "Someone would have to be hurt, and as far as I know, no one is."

"Hey Mike, wanna throw a knife at me?" Axel asked, wiggling his eyebrows. Mike rolled his eyes and flicked a spark at him, but it actually hit him, setting his sleeve on fire.

"Oh fuck." Mike put it out quickly. "Sorry dude."

"It's all good. At least Cath can fix this little burn." He shrugged, rolling up his sleeve and holding his wrist out to Catherine. The party crowded around as she healed it, watching the small red mark disappear in seconds.

"That's awesome. What's the worst injury you've had to heal?" Dustin asked.

"Hmm." She thought for a few seconds. "Probably when CeCe dropped

John from like, thirty feet in the air and he broke a few bones."

"We do not speak of it!" CeCe yelled.

"I agree," John shuttered and Catherine laughed.

"Ooh, Mike, let's show them that thing we did the other day." Mack told him. His eyes widened a little and he nodded in agreement.

"Okay guys, stand at the wall, I don't want anyone getting hurt." They stood against the wall and the two stood on separate sides of the room. Mack held her hands up and shot out giant shards of ice into the air. Mike did the same, and the flames shot out, meeting the ice halfway, steam billowing out above it. Water started to fall, but using one hand, he stopped the water and moved his hand in a series of different motions, the water following. He stopped the fire, and the rest of the ice turned to water, staying in the air thanks to Mike.

"Hey, anyone wanna open the door to the bathroom? Let this drain out?" He sad, looking at the group against the wall. The Party looked shocked, their mouths dropped open, even El's. With a laugh, Nora opened the door and Mike slowly moved the water in there so it could drain out. Wide eyed, Will said,

"That was so fucking cool."

14. Chapter 13

This chapter is actual *a s s* so I apologize and hope the rest of this story isn't the same :D

Also I'm sorry this has taken so long, life is *h a r d*.

Also I'm going back and editing the fuck outta EA cause I feel like a lot of it is confusing, but I'll let y'all know once it's edited if y'all want to go reread it :D. Also, to the OC's my lovely friends and readers have created, their ages and/or numbers will probably be a little different, so sorry about that! It just depends XD

This isn't very long cause next chapter is gonna be probably like 2000+ words and at this point it's very hard for me to write that so wish me luck! I PROMISE, that whenever I post the next chapter- hopefully a lot sooner but no promises, it'll be a lot longer than this one XD. Any idea what Sydney's power is?

"Guys." Shawn said, nearly running into the main room. "We have a problem."

"What's wrong?" Mike asked.

"They've found the Projects." He said, hands flailing around as he talked. Before he could actually continue, the four appeared with two kids in tow. They were unconscious on John's shoulders.

"Holy shit!" Catherine exclaimed, jumping up. "What happened?"

"These are the only two we could get before the alarms went off." Kali explained. "You two, take them to a room- shared room and take care of them. John, tell Catherine everything and I'll tell the rest." John nodded and the rushed off down the hall. Kali turned to everyone else.

"Follow me to the classroom. Mike, stand with me." She said, and marched down the hall towards the room. Mike glanced at his

friends, and the others, before following her quickly.

Once everyone was seated, Kali crossed her arms and looked at them, not saying anything.

"What the fuck, Kali?" Mike asked, "Don't just stand there in silence and stare at everyone, what the fuck is going on."

"We've found where the Projects are." She said, finally.

"How long have you known?" She hesitated.

"Two weeks." Almost instantly, Mike felt himself heating up- a side effect of his powers. When he got mad, well, let's just say it's not good. They've only just discovered this a few weeks ago.

"Kali." He said, warningly. "Why the *fuck* didn't you tell us?" He hissed.

"Because I know you would either want to instantly go there and try to shut it down, or fight me on what I wanted to do."

"Well, please do tell us your plan, Kali. It seems to me you've already fucked it up." She rolled her eyes at him.

"Since we found out where they are, we've been tracking everything possible. We know how many kids are in there, varying from different ages, when there aren't as many guards, when there's a lot, etcetera etcetera." Mike rolled his eyes at that.

"How many kids are there?" He asked.

"Four." She replied.

"What numbers?"

"They're all under the age of twelve." She replied, and looked at Asher, "I'm gonna go check on the two kids. Will you tell them everything else?" Asher nodded.

"There are four boys and two girls," He began, "Rashid is the oldest, he's twelve years old. Pablo is ten, Brietta is nine, James is seven,

Rico is 4, and Sydney is… we're not sure how old she is. Less than a year old."

"Oh my God." Mike rubbed at his eyes.

"We've got Rashid and Brietta. Sydney is gonna be hard to find- she uh, according to these papers, she's one of the more… powerful, experiments."

"How do they even know this?" El asked, eyebrows raised.

"Just like they knew you had abilities when they took you from your mother. They knew Sydney had them." El froze at that, and glared at him.

"Watch it, Asher." Mike growled. "Let me see the papers." Asher hesitated before handing him the stack he'd been holding. Mike sat at a table with El and put them between them, and everyone crowded around the two as best they could. Tyler appeared out of thin air and made Brittany pick him up so he could take Dustin's hat- the teen hadn't even noticed. "Rashid was number seventeen, his ability is super speed. Well fuck that." Mike muttered the last part. "His parents are still alive somewhere, we need to find them once all this is over with. Pablo was number eighteen, he can create force fields, Brietta was number nineteen and has invisibility…"

"That's gonna be a problem, I think." Axel piped up.

"No shit." Andi smacked his arm and he stuck his tongue out at her. Mike continued,

"There isn't a number twenty in here," He looked at Asher, who shrugged.

"I don't know if they have a twenty yet." Mike sighed and went back to the papers,

"James was twenty-one and can apparently… raise the dead? What the fuck?"

"Apparently, they forced him to kill a rabbit and then made him bring it back, but it was just bones with patches of fur clinging to it." Asher

explained.

"Poor bunny." El muttered. Mike nodded in agreement.

"Rico was number twenty-two has power manipulation- that's a new one, apparently. And Sydney was number twenty-three and… you've gotta be *fucking* kidding me."

15. Chapter 14

This is not my best and definitely not on time, but I wanted to get this out for my friend/brother Twenty, aka OTTSTF, who isn't twenty anymore, he's twenty one(juan)! Happy birthday, I love you! And I hope you enjoy this!Sorry it's taken me a little over 2 months for this, I'm gonna write you guys a long ass A/N explaining all the stuff that's gone on in my life since the new year. Like I told my mom, 2019 can suck my BUTT so far.Also, there are probably lots of errors but I hope they're not too bad. I'm typing this on my phone because i don't have wifi- therefore no computer so... When I get wifi again I'll edit this, but until then! Enjoy my shitty writing :D.

"What are her powers, Mike?" Will asked. Mike let the papers fall onto the table and covered his face with his hands, letting out a loud groan. El looked over Mike's shoulder.

"Huh." She bit her lip and her eyebrows furrowed, picking the papers up and looking at them closer. "It says here… telekinesis and pyrokinesis." Max let out a surprised laugh and Dustin choked on a cough.

"Did you two have a kid we didn't know about?" Lucas joked. Mike glared at Lucas and flicked a spark at him.

"Shut up." He hissed.

"I'm telling your mom that when you finally come home she's gonna have a grandkid already." Dustin grinned, wiggling his eyebrows. Mike's cheeks turned red and he took a deep breath.

"Shut up before I accidentally do something you won't be happy about, Dustin." Mike growled. He turned to Kali and Asher. "How long have you had these papers? And don't fucking tell me it's been two weeks. I know damn well it's been longer."

"Uh, two months." Asher replied hesitantly. Mike narrowed his eyes at him. "Five months."

"So this fucking baby has been in that goddamn lab for five months or longer? Why did you wait so goddamn long?"

"We didn't know where the lab was!" Asher told him. "We knew the Projects had her, but we didn't know where."

"That doesn't explain why you didn't tell the rest of us for two weeks." Axel said, glaring.

"You expect us to be fine that you keep shit like this from us?" Nora asked. "If so, you have another damn thing coming."

"We couldn't tell you." Kali said.

"Why the fuck not?" Mike asked. The rest of the Party just watched, not really knowing what to say as the argument grew.

Kali didn't say anything to him, she looked at the floor and asked quietly,

"Why?" Mike raised an eyebrow.

"Kali, what the hell?" She glanced up at him and he saw her eyes were glazed over.

"No, I'm not doing that." She said, looking back at the floor. "It will hurt him." Mike looked at everyone else and made a face. Everyone was just as confused as him.

"Kal?" Shawn asked, reaching out to put a hand on her shoulder. She stepped away from him, closer to Mike.

"Not you." She whispered. She looked at Mike, who had a confused look on his face. "I'm sorry." She said, and put her hands on the sides of his face. He looked confused for a couple seconds and then his entire body stiffened, brows furrowing. Whatever happened didn't last longer than five seconds, and as soon as Kali let him go, he let out a pained yell and crumbled to the floor. She followed suit, falling a little more graceful than he had.

"Mike!" El nearly shrieked and knelt next to him, pushing him over onto his back. "What the fuck?" She looked at Kali, who was

breathing hard, on her hands and knees.

"I'm sorry- I didn't want to. She made me do it."

"Who? Who made you do it? Do what?" Max demanded, towering over her.

"I don't know." Kali started crying. "I don't know who or what she is. She tells me things. A voice in my head."

"This is not how I expected our visit to go." Dustin deadpanned.

-

It's been hours since… she was transferred to Mike's head, as Kali explained. A voice telling her to kill the bad men. That voice is the only reason they knew that Brenner was still alive.

"I thought my mind was playing tricks on me, or Ender was messing with my head somehow but… it's a completely different voice. It's hard to explain… She-she has a smooth," Kali paused, "relaxing voice. It's almost comforting- that is, until she tells you to kill everyone. I have different plans, ideas on how to take down the labs that don't involve killing everyone. It'd be nice, though, to never have to worry about those people again. I don't know how she does it, but she makes me say things- like when I made Mike burn down the lab. I couldn't stop her."

Kali told them that five hours ago. It's nearing midnight, and Mike had yet to even move a muscle, made a noise, nothing.

The kids they brought in hadn't woken up either. According to John, when he and the other two saved the kids, they were getting a beating, and that he wasn't sure if the guards that were doing it were dead or alive now- but they weren't worried about them. Just the kids, and well, Mike right now. Catherine healed them as much as she could, and was sleeping on one of the free beds.

"What I don't understand, is when and how did this voice even get in your head, Kali?" CeCe asked. "And how come we haven't realized it?"

"How long have you had this voice in your head, is the main

question, here." Axel said.

"I don't think that's the main question here." Dustin muttered to himself.

"Look, guys, just… give Kali a break for now. I think she needs to go rest or eat or both, and once she's feeling a little better and Mike is awake, she can explain what's going on. Lord knows Mike needs to be awake when it's explained, or he'll get pissed." Will said.

"Yeah, what he said." Axel pointed at him.

"His name is Will, dipshit." Mack said, shaking her head.

"Of course you know his name, Mackenzie." Mack flipped him off and shot a small shard of ice at him. He shrieked and ran away.

"Shh!" Half of the group shushed him, but he just laughed and ran out the door, Mack following him.

"I hate him." CeCe grumbled.

"No you don't." Ender replied. CeCe gave her a flat look and Ender winked at her. CeCe blushed but no one noticed, so she said,

"I'm gonna, uh, go to bed? So if anyone needs me, that's where I'll be." She almost ran out of the room.

"What's up with her?" Brittany asked, looking at Ender and Andi, and the two shrugged.

"I'm gonna go see if she's okay." Ender said. She took off after CeCe and Dustin snorted.

"They're probably gonna fuck."

"Dustin!" Lucas smacked him.

"Uh, what do you mean?" Polly asked.

"Do you not know what fucking means?"

"No, I do." She said, "but why do you say they are?"

"Are they not together?" He asked, tilting his head.

"Apparently not, asshat, quit talking like that. Everything going on is too serious for that bullshit, Dustin." El said, flicking his hat off again.

"Would you quit that?" He whined.

"Would you quit that?" She mocked.

"Okay, we're all being childish at this point, come on, new people, I'll show you where we set your rooms up if they haven't already." Asher said.

"They did but I don't remember where." Lucas said. They told El goodnight- knowing she wasn't going to leave Mike- and followed Asher closely. Eventually, it was just El and Nora left in the room. Nora was checking on the kids and Catherine when she said,

"He'll be okay, you know. Cath knows what she's doing."

"I know." El told her, running a thumb over Mike's knuckles. "I always worry about him, though, have since I met him. He, uh, the year I was gone was a rough year for him and he's told me things that… I don't want to say." She paused. "I felt the same way he did while he was gone, while those sorry bastards had him. It was my fault, to start with, you know? They got him and beat him, wanting to know where I was. He wouldn't tell them, though." She sighed, running a hand through her hair.

"I worry too." Nora said, sitting next to her and patting her shoulder. "Hell, I worry about all of you, even your weird little friend Dustin." El chuckled at that.

"Everyone worries about him." She told her.

"Makes sense. But anyways, Mike is just… i've never met anyone like him, at such a young age-"

"You're not that much older than us." El raised an eyebrow at her and Nora chuckled. "You're like Nancy's age."

"She's a little older than me, I think. I just turned nineteen about a

week ago."

"Oh, did you? Happy late birthday then." The two girls chuckled.

"Thank you. But Mike is just, how should I say this? A determined little shit." El nodded in agreement. "He's brave, smart, a good leader. Honestly, I'd rather him lead us than anyone else in our group. I mean, I honestly don't trust Asher one hundred percent, because he used to work for a lab. He saved Mack and all, but… what's the saying? You can't change stripes on a tiger?"

"Yeah, did Mike teach you that?"

"He did."

"I love him." Nora chuckled.

"He loves you too. God, he never stops talking about you when you leave."

"He's such a nerd."

"I'm telling him you said that." Nora grinned at her. El rolled her eyes but shrugged. Nora patted her shoulder again.

"I'm gonna head to bed, if you need me or anyone else, don't hesitate to ask." El nodded. "Goodnight."

"Night."

16. Chapter 15

I've triggered myself with this chapter, guys, that's why it's so short omg. I love it and I hope you guys do too! A few of your questions are answered, I hope.

Since it's so short, there'll be another chapter sooner rather than later that's longer :D

By the time Kali took her hands off him, Mike's (short) life flashed before his eyes. He felt every single feeling, remembered every single memory, thought every thought over again. By the time he hit the ground, he saw things… he didn't think he'd ever experience. He knew how everything ended, he knew what the end result would be. He just… didn't know *how* to get to that point.

So when he *woke* up in nothing but darkness, a thin layer of water over the floor that he couldn't even *feel*, the only thing he could do was freak out. Being able to see his lower body helped the tiniest bit.

"What the fuck, what the fuck- Kali, what the fuck? El!" He yelled, standing up.

"No one can hear you." A voice said. He whipped around, looking for the source but saw nothing.

"Who are you? *Where* are you?" He yelled.

"You can't see me either Mike." She(?) said. "Yes, I'm a girl. Your thoughts are you talking. We're inside your head right now."

"What the FUCK."

"You have a filthy mouth. Worse than Kali, and that's saying a lot."

"What the FUCK?" His voice cracked at the end. "I'm going insane, Axel must've hit me in the head with a bat again. What's happening, what's happening? What the FUCK." He gripped his hair, whipping around in circles until he got dizzy, falling onto the floor not so gracefully. "Ow, if this is my mind, why did that HURT?" He

exclaimed.

"Because your body hit the floor."

"No shit."

"No, your *body* hit the floor. Remember, we're inside your mind right now. Your real body passed out and hit the ground. You're feeling the delayed effect."

"What the fuck."

"Calm down and take a deep breath for me."

"Don't tell me what to do!" He yelled. He took a deep breath anyways.

"Think about this rationally, Mike. I'm not just a *voice* in your head. When meeting someone new, what should you do first?"

"Um… ask their name?"

"No, you'd greet them and ask them how they're doing. But in this case, correct."

"Fucking-"

"My name is Apolline."

"Can you repeat that?" Mike squeaked.

"Apolline."

"Can I call you Apple?" The voice- Apple- chuckled. A strange sense of calm washed over him, and he dropped his hands.

"You can call me whatever you like, as long as it's appropriate, of course."

"Cool." He deadpanned. "Um… so, you say I'm- We're in my mind?"

"Yes. This is the place Jane Ives, commonly known as El Hopper, calls the void."

"Whoa."

"You probably would have had a completely different visual of the void if you'd never met her, or if she had never told you what it looked like. Those who can visit the void see various different thing, based on their experiences in life."

"Do you see something different?"

"It's similar." She said. He heard the distant sound of what sounded like footsteps in the water- sloshing around. "What I see around me is not black. It's white, and the water is grey. Close your eyes for me, Mike."

"Um, okay." He closed his eyes.

"Now, I want you to take slow, deep breaths, and think about your life. You had more good times than bad, yes?"

"Somewhat."

"You can either focus on the good, or focus on the bad. Choose."

"The good."

"Focus on the good for a while, and open your eyes."

"How long?"

"However long you think." She replied. He closed his eyes for a few moments, and opened them. He was sitting in the sand, a beach in front of him.

"Wow." He whispered. "I haven't been to the beach since I was little."

"That was a great memory, then, I assume?"

"It was one of the few times my dad actually had a good time with us." He replied.

"Focus on the good, Mike. Your father isn't important." Mike nodded in agreement.

"So… El sees the void the way I was seeing it?"

"Yes. You had a choice to focus on the good or bad, just as she did. She chose to focus on the bad. But it wasn't her fault, she was very young. All she knew was the bad. Kali sees the same thing."

"I hate it." He huffed, burying his fingers in the sand.

"I know. I hate it too. But that was the past, and this is the present. The future is brighter than the sun for you and her, Mike."

"So… what are you, exactly? Are you a person? Or just… a thing?"

"I am a person. I was once an experiment like you, in Europe. That's where I got my name, I'm from France. I'm much older than you think."

"How come I can't see you?"

"Because I don't want you to."

"What are your powers?"

"Time Manipulation, it's why I'm still alive. Mental Projection, that's how I'm speaking with you, and others alike."

"You're talking to more than just me?" He asked, eyes widening.

"No," She chuckled. "I can talk to one person at a time. Only those with abilities." Mike gasped.

"Wait, is that why my life flashed before my eyes? Did you show me that?" He asked.

"I did. You're very smart, Mike. I know how the world ends, I know when you die. It's the worst part of being the only one in the world with this type of Time manipulation, I know everything about everyone."

"How do you manage that?"

"I've managed to block most of it out. I can focus on the most

important things."

"And talking to me is the most important thing?"

"At the moment, yes."

"Are you God?" He asked in an accusing voice. Apple let out a shocked laugh.

"No, I'm not God."

"You sound like you'd be God."

"I just know what happens, I'm not the one making things happen. But we're not talking religion, here, Michael."

"Oh, the full name."

"Yes. I'm not gonna keep you for much longer, it's already been hours and I'm sure your friends are worried. Do you have anymore questions for me? *Serious* questions for me?"

"I have three." He said. "Does anyone I love die because of the Projects?"

"No."

"How did you get to Kali? Or- why did you choose her?"

"She was the only way I could get to you. I'll explain *why* next time we talk.

"Will we have to deal with the Upside Down anymore?"

"I'll talk to you again soon, Mike. I'll warn you before I bring you back."

"You didn't answer the question, Apple." She sighed.

"Yes."

17. Chapter 16

Mike explains what Apple told him, and he and a few others do some research to try and figure out just what the hell the Projects are up to and how it *really* started out.

Sunday, August 16, 1987

"If he's anything like me, he'll vomit when he wakes up. The things she tells you are not what you want to hear." Kali said, placing a trash can next to Mike's bed.

"How would that make him puke?" Dustin asked.

"Well, his mind is pretty much in a different place. She's taking him into the void- and the first few times that happens, you usually throw up. At least, I did. She takes him there and tells you she's immortal."

"Wow, she sounds pretty cool." He said. El sighed. "Where is she?"

"She won't tell." Kali said. "She'll just tell you she's in a far away place or something, I don't know, when we spoke she just told me to kill people or make Mike burn down the lab. Wouldn't tell me why- I don't think she liked me." Before she could continue, Mike let out a groan and opened his eyes.

"Mike!" El exclaimed, standing so he could see her better. He took a deep breath.

"I'm gonna puke." She rushed to pick up the trash can and put it in front of him just in time for him to sit up and release all contents of his stomach. Everyone else just cringed- and Lucas had to leave the room or else he'd be throwing up too. El rubbed his back until he spit the last of it out. "Fuck." He croaked.

"Is he done?" Lucas asked. "I got him some water."

"Yeah, you big baby." Max called. He mumbled under his breath as he walked in, and handed Mike the water.

"Thanks." Mike mumbled.

"What'd it tell you?" Axel asked, immediately.

"Give me a minute you fucking ass." Mike sparked him and Axel shrieked. Mike let out a sighe and ran a hand through his hair. He looked at Kali. "First off, fuck you." Then he turned to El and made grabby hands for her. "I love you." He muttered into her hair, hugging her tight.

"I love you too." She hugged him back, kissing the top of his head.

After a couple seconds, they let go of each other.

"Lemme go brush my teeth and I'll tell you all about the fuckin' future."

"You're telling me that she actually told you things?" Kali asked. "Of importance?"

"I literally just asked if anyone was gonna die and if we were done with the upside down. Both answers were no."

"You named it Apple?" Andi asked.

"I'm gonna punch you."

"I'm a girl."

"El will punch you."

"Please don't."

"Did she tell you how the void worked?" Kali asked. Mike nodded.

"I saw what you and El see at first, the darkness, water… I was able to choose what I saw too."

"What was it?" El asked.

"The beach." He shrugged.

"It's almost been three years since we dealt with the upside down last." Will said.

"Yeah, why now? How? I closed the gate." El ran a hand through her hair.

"I guess you could go check and make sure its closed?" Lucas suggested.

"No- hell no." Mike said immediately. "She can't and she won't."

"There's nothing left there, dude." Dustin said.

"Yeah, that's what Hopper thought when I was stuck at the lab. When Kali hid me from him."

"I apologized for that." She rolled her eyes. "Let it go."

"I haven't let go of you forcing me to kill people either so shut the fuck up." He retorted. "But that's not the point I'm trying to make here. If *we* were replacements for experiments before us, that means they probably have replacements for us at this point. They might have one for El and Kali, and could be hiding out at Hawkins lab again, if any of us were to go there we'd get caught. I'm not risking it.

"There's one of you and El." Dustin snickered.

"Dustin, I swear to God."

"Quit it." Catherine said,swatting at his arm. He shut up quick. Mike smirked.

"You have a point, Mike." El said. "Someone else could've opened the gate and the other is able to hide it from us."

"Did she say when it would happen? Whatever it is?" Will asked, biting his lip. Mike shook his head.

"Why are you so against it if it isn't even open now." CeCe asked.

"Like I said, I don't want to risk it. No one is going to look, and if I find out you guys did, I'll beat your asses." He looked at the rest of

the party. Max stuck her tongue out at him. "I'll see if I can find out any more information on both problems next time I talk to her, but for now, let's talk about how we're gonna get those kids out of that lab."

"Asher, I need you to get your inside guy or whatever to get as much information on the labs and Projects as possible." Mike said, barging into the mans room with the Party in tow.

"Ever heard of knocking?" Mike waved him off.

"That's not important. We need to know everything possible about them."

"Why?" He asked.

"Because this is all just a giant, jumbled puzzle and we're gonna put it together. We have no idea where this baby is being held and I want to find her as soon as possible." He replied. "And Dustin, if you make a joke I will burn your hat."

"Not my hat!"

"I'll see what I can do. In the meantime…" Asher rolled over in his rolling chair, to a large filing cabinet and opened the bottom drawer, pulling out a loaded down box of papers and folders. "I've managed to get information on experiments, new and old, from 1961 to 1985, the year Brittany was born and when Mike was first taken. Most of your files are in there, and then some."

"Most of?" El asked. Asher nodded.

"We've got the two new kids, those other four… We *don't* have one for Andi, John or Shawn."

"I don't need information on the experiments, not necessarily. I need all that I can get about the Projects and the labs. The origin story, if you will."

"I already told you-"

"Yeah, but there's so many gaps in that story. I want to read every piece of information possible." Mike said. "Let me know when you get it. Come on guys."

As the group walked down the hall, Dustin asked,

"Do you two not like each other or something?"

"It's not that we don't like each other. I just don't trust him one hundred percent." Mike shrugged. "I mean, he used to work in a lab. I still don't even fully trust Owens- wait." Mike dropped the box on a table in one of the meeting rooms, a loud bang echoed around the room. "El, do you think you can ask Hopper to convince Owens to come here?" He asked, turning to his girlfriend.

"I will." She nodded. "I'll make him come if I have to." He grinned at her.

"Will one of you guys take this to the main room?" He asked, getting putting all the personal files in a stack. Dustin saluted him and took off. Mike snorted and sat down, beginning to sort through the papers.

"Can we do anything?" Lucas asked.

"Yeah, Wheeler, we don't want to just sit here and watch you make notes." Max added.

"Yeah, actually." Mike stood up. "Be right back." He disappeared and Will started, eyes widening.

"I keep forgetting he can do that. Jesus Christ." He put a hand over his heart and the others laughed. Dustin came back in the room with a dopey grin. Mike popped back in front of him- arms full of books- and he screamed.

"Fucking *hell* Mike, what the shit?" He squeaked, leaning on his knees as he caught his breath. Mike snickered.

"Oh, so it's okay for you to just pop up in random places, huh?"

"Yeah, because I don't just appear out of *thin air*, Michael."

"Yeah, yeah, Dusty." Dustin flipped him off when he turned towards the others. "I don't know exactly what's in these books but I think they might help us."

"Where'd you find these?" El asked. "And how come Asher didn't tell you about them?" Mike shrugged.

"Mack found them in his room one day and took them all to her room. She got me to help her take them to her room, and we eventually took them to the library and put them in a locked box in case he needed them. Like I said, I don't trust him."

The books weren't very big, and the group of six managed to read through them and write down the main things that happened in them in about two hours.

"We've all got like three pages, Mike." Dustin said. "Can we take a break? And I don't know, eat something? I brought snacks." Mike snorted as he put his book face down on the table.

"Of course you did. Yeah, we can take a break. You guys don't have to do this, though, you know?"

"We know, but if that's all you're gonna do while we're here, we're gonna help. Spend *some* time with you, even if it's boring." Max shrugged, snatching a bag of chips from Dustin.

"Rude." He muttered.

"I'm sorry, guys. After everything yesterday and the shit with Apple, I need to find out everything I can. That is how you're supposed to take down Government officials, isn't it? According to the movies, at least. Like, keep your friends close and enemies closer, whatever the saying is. Know all the weaknesses, strengths, you know, the whole shebang." Mike popped a couple M&M's in his mouth. Someone knocked on the door and the Party turned to look as Kali opened the door.

"The children are awake." She said. "They're freaking out and from what I've heard- and seen- you're good at calming people, Mike."

"I'll be there in a minute." Mike told her, standing and pulling his

pants up a little. "Someone ask Steve if he has more pants I can have."

"Dude, you're taller than him now. They'd be no use."

"Really?" Mike asked. Kali left with a shake of her head.

"Yeah, you can see him when he comes to get us tomorrow." Max grinned.

"And I'll tell your mom you need now pants. I'm sure she'd be glad to buy you some." El put a hand on his shoulder. He frowned a little and nodded,

"That's another reason. I'm ready to get this shit over with so I can go *home*."

Rashid and Brietta were… well, very confused and very scared. They were in the corner of the room, limbs wrapped around each other, Rashid in front of her as if protecting her. Mike and El looked at each other and she took her bracelet off, moving it to her other arm. The two stayed a few feet back and crouched in front of them.

"Hello, you're safe here." Mike told them softly. "We're like you."

"How?" Rashid spit, glaring. They showed their wrists side by side.

"I was Eleven." El told them.

"I was Twelve." Mike said. "Did they teach you there?"

Rashid hesitated, and finally nodded.

"So you can speak?"

"Obviously." He muttered.

"He's got that pre-teen bite, that's for sure." Mike whispered to El, who giggled.

"You say… was? Are you not Eleven and Twelve anymore?" He asked, he and Brietta releasing their holds on each other, but staying close

and in the corner.

"No." El shook her head. "I'm El, and this is Mike."

"Mike?" Brietta asked softly. "Fireman."

"You've heard of me, then?" Mike smiled.

"Yes. Bad things." She said. Mike frowned and looked at El. "But you don't… look… bad."

"He's not, Sweetie. He's… he's amazing. He saved me."

"You're safe here, I promise. We're looking for all of you, we're gonna save all of you." Mike promised. "And when it's all over, we'll return you to your families."

18. Chapter 17

Saturday, September 5, 1987

It took about two weeks for Mike to get what he wanted, and boy was he glad to get it. He got it a mere three days ago, and was going at it constantly, writing down information and slapping it on a wall. Literally. He'd turned the meeting room into a full on pig pen but on the walls. He had sticky notes and thumb tacks with different colored string on it on a wall, colors on a piece of paper signaling which year was what color.

It's been three weeks since the Party visited, and Rashid and Brietta were rescued. A weekend trip to Nebraska last week revealed a brand new lab, of which they were experimenting on adults and injecting them with *something*- mainly *pregnant women*- to see if it would give them powers, or the child powers. Thanks to Mike, El and Brittany, all were rescued and that lab was now in pieces underground with everyone in.

"Dude, you need to take a nap." Lucas said, he and Max walking in with El. The two were staying the weekend along with El. Will didn't want his mom to get suspicious and Dustin was sick with what Hopper had.

"Hello to you too." Mike slapped a sticky note on the wall, then took it off and put it in another place.

"You really do look like hell, Wheeler." Max said.

"I am Hell." He replied. The two looked at each other and then El, who shrugged.

"Not exactly wrong there." Mike snickered.

"I haven't slept a full night since I got all that shit." He gestured to the pile of books, binders and folders, all of which were at least a foot tall, filled to the brim with papers.

"You'd think there would be more than that." Lucas said, walking

over and looking at one of the folders, which was dated in the 1940's. "This was a thing in the 40s?"

"Yep. And the reason there isn't so much is because this is all of it, I made sure." El said. "I watched as dad talked to Dr. Owens and he said it himself that there wasn't much to go on. Most of the information is only in books and folders, which we have. He also said that the person who started the Projects and the Labs was an idiot and didn't think it'd be necessary to take note of every single thing like they do now."

"When did it start?" Lucas asked. Mike perked up a little and stood at his full height, teacher mode at the ready.

"See, before I left Hawkins to come here, Kali told us the story of the Projects, correct?" They nodded. El couldn't help but smile as she watched him. "Well, she told us that a man with pyrokinesis burned down an entire town in Maine about thirty years ago, and that's when the Projects were created. But that's not the case. I fully expected to find the earliest date being in the fifties, but nope. The earliest date is 1903."

"Are you serious?" Max asked. Lucas jaw dropped. Mike nodded.

"Mhm. The first ever person with powers, that was recorded, was a fourteen year old girl named Lucy Parvo. Asher was wrong too, or he said it to bullshit me but whatever. She could make flowers or any plant grow. She lived in Arizona, and you know how dry and hot it is there." They nodded, sitting at the desk. "Well, flowers and trees that didn't belong in Arizona started popping up. According to this little journal-" He held up an old, used book. "She had been researching and looking at plants, and that resulted in her creating them. A fourteen year old named William Ghoens found out and they became friends. He had powers too, water. Could produce water out of thin air, and that helped her."

"What's this got to do with the Projects and Labs, though? Did they get caught by them?" Lucas asked.

"No. They created them."

Saturday, September 12, 1987

"Hold the phone." Steve held a hand up. "You're telling me two fourteen year olds with *powers* created the Projects, who experiment on and torture other powered people?" Mike nodded.

"Yes."

A week later, Mike had finished going through all the information he'd been given- he's a determined little shit if you haven't noticed- and for the most part, had the origin story done. He had a whole pile and a half of folders and binders to look at that was on the old experiments and what the labs were doing now- and where they were located.

Steve, Hopper, the Party and the rest of the former experiments sat in one of the bigger meeting rooms, where Mike had drawn a timeline from 1903 to 1963, for every ten years.

"It didn't start out that way, of course. Everyone thought they were insane, until they proved it in front of the entire town. That started a chain reaction, people trying to move things, grow things, create things. It never worked, and for some it drove them insane. To the point they killed themselves. But there were others like them. Different powers, of course. In nineteen thirteen, the two were twenty four years old and the first *lab* was created. It was also in their garage. Apparently, the two had fallen in love and got married when they were sixteen-"

"You and El aren't getting married now, Wheeler." Hopper pointed at him.

"What? No, that's not important right now." Mike waved him off.

"Right now? So it *will* be important one day?" Nora asked, grinning.

"You shut your mouth. Zip!" He and El both turned red. "*Anyways*, they got married at sixteen, and by the time they were twenty four, they had four kids, all with powers."

"Oh God." Hopper put his face in his hands. Everyone else laughed.

"Guys, come on." Mike grumbled. "This is serious."

"You sound like you're just making up the story of you and El." Dustin said.

"Guys." El said. "Stop. Seriously."

"We're just trying to make light of the situation." Max said.

"Yeah and we don't need *light* in this situation." Mike huffed. "If you'd let me talk and stop interrupting me, you'd know *why* it's important. And trust me, *if* El and I have kids, we won't do what those people did." El nodded in agreement.

"Oh God, what'd they do?"

"They did experiments on their kids."

"Fuck."

"Of course, they weren't as crazy as they are now, considering none of the technology we have today was even thought of back then. It doesn't say what they did, but it was bad. The youngest kid had pyrokinesis. Had lots of anger issues growing up because of his parents, couldn't control the fire. He would have episodes… Moved to Maine while he was still young to get away from them. Put two and two together, guys." He said.

"Yeah, remember the town in Maine that was burned down?" El asked.

"That was him?" Ender exclaimed.

"He burned down an entire town in Maine? Seriously?" Steve asked.

"Yep." Mike nodded. "That was when the Projects were created."

"Lucy and William created the projects, didn't they?" Tannern asked. Mike nodded.

"Did… did *they* kill him?" Shawn asked.

"No. But they watched him be killed by the townspeople. All that shit is in these books. It's crazy, and it gets worse over the years."

"Quick question." Axel said, raising his hand. Mike rolled his eyes.

"What, Axel."

"Can *you* burn down a whole town?" He asked, rubbing his chin curiously.

"Well," El started, leaning forward on the table, resting her chin on her hand. "He *is* Hell after all."

"What?" Dustin asked, voice cracking.

"I am Hell." Mike repeated for her.

"When did you figure that out? That's gotta feel weird-"

"Dustin…" Mike face palmed. "Are you still sick or just getting dumber with age?"

"Uh, both." He replied doofily. Mike rolled his eyes and snorted.

"Love sick, yeah. Actual sick? No." Steve said, yelling when Dustin hit him on the shoulder, hard.

"Shut up." He hissed. Steven just grinned.

"Wheeler?" Hopper asked, and everyone turned to look at said teen, who was clutching the side of the table to hold himself up. His eyes were glazed over and he was muttering to himself.

"Dammit." El stood up and rushed to Mike's side, wrapping an arm around his middle and using her powers to get him to let go of the table, instead giving him one of her hands. She sat him down in a chair and sat in front of him as everyone gathered around the two.

"What the hell is happening?" Hopper asked, snapping his fingers in front of Mike."

"Usually, he passes out but we figured out that if he holds on to

something he's grounded and while she's talking to him, he won't just fall out in the floor."

"Talking to who?" Steve asked.

"Apple." CeCe piped up.

"Apple?" Hopper looked at El, who looked up at him.

"You don't know about Apple?" She asked. He shook his head, eyebrows furrowed.

"Is this a Snow White situation?" Steve asked, cocking his head to the side in confusion. Nearly half of the group face palmed while Shawn, Kali and Polly pulled the two men to the side to explain who Apple was and what was happening to Mike.

"Michael, the more people you tell, the more people will want to go to war with you." Apple said immediately.

"War? What the hell, way to start a conversation off." He grumbled, sitting down in the sand. He was muttering to himself on the outside as he talked.

"There is a war on it's way, and it's fast approaching if you don't do something about it."

"First off, there are about a million wars going on as we speak."

"No there isn't, stop exaggerating."

"Well explain before telling me there's a war!"
"Sorry, I'm just worried."

"Besides, the more the merrier right? You can't win a war with few people."

"No, but a war against the Projects and Experiments is mutiny. They'll have everything possible to win this war and it will kill you all, especially with non-powered humans fighting on your side of it."

"I like how you give all the context *then* explain what's happening."

She sighed, and he could imagine she was rolling her eyes at him.

"The Projects are moving from place to place, and are making new Labs. Martin Brenner knows that you are rescuing kids and he and others are capturing more and more people. He's trying to lure you in by taking non-powered people, and capture you. Especially you."

"Why?"

"Because, as of right now, you're the only power type he doesn't have. He wants to create a… breeding… center, if you will."

"He wants to make more of us? Of people like me?" Mike asked.

"Those naturally born with it, like you and I, are more powerful. Your friend Tannern? That wasn't natural. If it was, he'd end up just like me."

"Huh."

"El would be much, *much* more powerful if she was born with natural powers, rather than the lab causing them while her mother was still pregnant. As you called yourself Hell, you're actually correct. The power inside of you could create a hell on earth if you're not careful."

"I can't be *that* powerful." Mike shook his head. "I'm just joking because of the fire."

"I'm aware, but it's true. The older you get, the stronger you get. I'd advise you get as far away from your friends and family as possible. When you're angry, you heat up. What happens when you blow up?"

"This, this isn't right… Why are you telling me this now? The last few times we've talked you've been nothing but encouraging. What the fuck."

"Things change, the future changes-"

"Bull shit."

"You need to leave them, Mike, soon. It's for yours, and their safety."

"Fuck you. Get out of my head."

"You'll see that I'm right, Mike. You will."

When Mike came to, everyone was looking at him.

"The first person…" He started, standing up, "who asks a damn question right now, *will* be burned." He hissed. He pulled his hands away from El's a little too harshly, and she sat back on her knees, staring at him in shock. He let out a huff as he pushed the chair out of the way, glancing down at her and seeing the look on her face. "I'm sorry, El." He whispered and left the room.

"What the hell." Lucas deadpanned, turning to Kali. "What just happened?" He demanded.

"I'm assuming she said something he didn't like." She replied. "I don't fucking know, she's not in my head anymore. She can't contact me."

"I've never seen him… that look on his face." El said, looking at them.

"He looked scared and angry." Will said. "But something was different about it." El nodded in agreement.

"I'm gonna see if I can talk to him." She said, standing but Steve held up a hand.

"Let me try something." He said. She raised an eyebrow at him. "It'll be fine. It's not like I'ma yell at him or something."

19. Chapter 18

No specific person is talking in that little "what the fuck- a war?" bit right before the first line break XD. It's up to your imagination :D.

Ngl this chapter is meant to be comical with SOME seriousness business but like... it might not actually be to y'all but it is to me XD

Next few chapters will hopefully come quicker than usual (no promises though) and probably not as serious as they should be, I'm gonna be focusing on relationships for the most part, with rescues mainly in the background, but those are still important.

"Hey Mike? Can we talk?" Steve asked, knocking on Mike's door. He faintly heard Mike's voice, but he didn't open the door. He continued knocking on the door repeatedly, waiting for it to open. He heard a door open behind him but ignored it.

"Steve, I love you, but you're a real idiot." Mike said from behind him. Steve jumped and whipped around.

"This isn't your room?" He asked.

"Obviously not?" Mike rolled his eyes and turned on his heel, walking back into his room but leaving the door open this time. Steve walked in after him, looking around the room. Mike and Axel no longer shared a room, as Axel had walked in on the he and El making out- sometimes half naked- too many times and he got tired of it, and moved into a room next to Andi. Not like the couple were complaining.

It was very Mike, all things considered. The Party got him new posters and books they thought he'd like, and had sent them with El and Hopper when they came. The guitar Hopper bought him sat in the corner of the room, and the walkman sat on a small table beside his bed, the tapes next to it. There were even some of the mixed tapes Steve had helped Jonathan make in the stack.

"Your room is pretty cool." Mike shrugged.

"I guess. The one at home is cooler." He fell face first onto the bed, burying his face in his pillow. Steve snorted and sat on the edge of the bed next to the teens legs, slapping him on the ass. Mike's head jerked up so fast Steve was surprised it hadn't given him whiplash.

"What the fuck, Steve?" He sat up completely and glared at him.

"What, Dustin's cool with it."

"I don't like people just slapping me on the ass, you *ass*."

"You like it when El does it, though." Steve wiggled his eyebrows. Mike stuck his middle finger up, flames fluttering around it.

"Try me, fucker." Mike raised an eyebrow at Steve, who gulped.

"Sorry." He said. They stared at each other until Mike grinned, and the two started laughing.

After a minute or two, they calmed down, and Mike sighed,

"I needed that, after that shit storm conversation with Apple."

"Speaking of, is that *her* real name or like, a nickname or something?"

"Her real name is like… Alphine- no, amphetamine? No that's medicine." Mike snorted and snapped his fingers, trying to remember. You better believe Steve watched those fingers, slightly terrified that he'd get burned still. "Apolline! That's it."

"That's weird."

"It's French or some shit. I don't know."

"If you don't mind me asking, what exactly did she… *say* to piss you off?"

"Well, when we talk, she usually goes into a little more detail. Then today, all she said was I needed to stop telling people about the Projects because, apparently, there's gonna be a war between us, and

them, and she thinks that having non-powered people on our side will make us lose it."

"But… the Projects are non-powered, right?" Mike nodded.

"As far as I know, yeah. I doubt they'd send any powered people who are on their side out to fight, they wouldn't want them to die."

"You should probably go tell everyone that." Mike groaned and rolled his eyes, grabbing his pillow and smacking himself with it until Steve snatched it from him. "Stop, you little shit."

"I'm not little anymore, I'm as tall as you."

"*I'm as tall as you*," Steve mocked. "Get your ass up and go be smart in front of everyone." Mike huffed and- *accidentally*- kicked Steve as he swung his legs around to get up. "You, Michael Wheeler, are a little asshole."

"*Little asshole.*" Mike mocked. "Come on."

The two made their way back to the meeting room, where everyone was talking quietly, Lucas, Dustin, Andi and Axel theorizing about what Mike and Apple talked about. Steve whistled in Mike's ear and Mike whacked him.

"I will literally burn your hair off, Harrington."

"Please don't."

"Anyways," Mike sighed, and looked at El, "I'm sorry for just snatching my hands away. I had to get away because I know you guys would start asking questions and honestly… what we, well, *she* talked about, kind of scared me, and really freaked and grossed me out."

"How does a war between the Projects and Experiments freak and gross you out?" Steve asked, sitting next to Dustin. Mike stared at him, closed his eyes and waited.

"WAR?"

"What the fuck- a war?"

"Are we being drafted?"

"When does it start? I think I'm busy that day…"

"Steve, you're not allowed back here."

"Okay but I don't see what's gross about the war." Max said, arms crossed.

"Because that's not the only thing she told me." Mike said, reaching up and scratching the back of his neck. "She said that… the Projects are moving from place to place, creating new labs and just… taking people, powered or not. Apparently, Brenner knows that I- we- are rescuing kids from the labs and is trying to, uh, lure me in, as she said, by capturing non-powered people."

"Why are they trying to get *you*?" Hopper asked.

"Because I'm the only missing ability." Mike said. "Which confuses me a little, because we've rescued a few already so they've got to be missing more, unless they *are* finding replacements."

"I think the real question is why?" Andi asked. "It's obvious they're not gonna win, we keep rescuing kids and adults and no one ever gets caught."

"Are they trying to create a damn zoo or something?" Lucas asked.

"That's what it sounds like." Will agreed.

"I wish that's all it was- I wish none of this was happening." Mike said, crossing his arms. "I'm not one hundred percent trusting what she told me, after changing the topic of war so quickly and just giving me an idea of what's going on, rather than actually telling me. But… Brenner wants to… to create a breeding center, pretty much." Everyone just stared at him, the room dead silent. "Apple told me that those born with natural abilities are much stronger than those who weren't. El would be ten times as powerful if hers was natural. Tannern would be like Apple if his were natural too, it's what she

told me."

"What… the… fuck." Hopper muttered. "I really need to talk to Owens about this."

"Yeah, fucking kidnap him if you have to and bring his ass here like I wanted to do in the first place." Mike agreed.

"So, if our parents had nothing to do with the labs, then our abilities are natural?" Polly asked. Mike nodded. "Mine sure aren't."

"It should be in your folders, whether your parents were a part of a lab or had anything to do with them."

"So yours are natural, huh?" Mack asked. Mike nodded, shrugging.

"Apple said that I can create hell on earth if I'm not careful." He said.

"It seems the older you get, the more powerful." Axel said. "Because when you first got here, you could barely teleport a mile, or create the smallest campfire without your nose bleeding."

"You feel like you're heating up when you're pissed and sometimes sparks literally fly when you and El kiss." Kali added. Mike shrugged.

"I can just imagine what would happen if they had-" Dustin started but before he could continue, his hat lifted off his head and started repeatedly smacking him on the head.

"Dustin nor Steve is allowed back to the bunker." El said, waving her hand back and forth as the hat hit Dustin.

"Funny." He deadpanned.

"How are you gonna get mad at her for smacking you with your own hat when you always make stupid sexual jokes about us?" Mike asked, raising an eyebrow. "Be glad it's not me that's fucking with your hat because it'd be on fire. *On* your head."

"I'm just joking, it's how I cope. You know this."

"Well joke about your own sex life or something. Jesus." El said,

throwing the hat to the other side of the room. He ran after it, muttering to himself.

"Back to the problem at hand." Hopper said, rolling his eyes at them. "So Brenner wants *you* and who knows how many others… to make powerful babies?"

"Pretty much, yeah."

"Mike." El said. He looked at her, and her eyebrows were raised. "You're not allowed to do that." Mike rolled his eyes, cheeks turning pink.

"I'm not planning on it."

"I seriously doubt the rest of the experiments would do it." Will said. "Unless they were raised with the projects from birth and that's all they know, but… from what I can tell, most that were born and taken or raised with them has escaped- like El and Tannern for example."

"So that being all they know isn't an excuse anymore because they're all new replacements and they're older." Kali said. "

"They can't just force them to do the do, can they? I mean, they've got to be different ages and I don't think Mike would want to be cuddling up with a thirty year old woman."

"DUSTIN!"

"Catherine, shut your boyfriend up." Nora said, rolling her eyes. The two blushed but Catherine gave him a look and he shut up with a quiet,

"Sorry."

"Oh so you two aren't denying it then?" Mike asked, wiggling his eyebrows.

"Shut up, Mike." Dustin grumbled, crossing his arms.

"Why don't we all shut up about relationships and figure out what the hell we're gonna do about this, yeah?" Shawn suggested. "This is

serious, we need to *be* serious."

Everyone looked at Mike at the exact same time, the boy making a face at them.

"Why are you looking at me?" He asked.

"I mean… you are our leader, pretty much." CeCe said. Mike raised an eyebrow.

"Since fucking when?"

"Since you got here, honestly." Shawn said.

"Bullshit."

"Correction, we've *felt* like you're our leader for a while now. I mean, you boss us around like one." Andi commented and Mike flipped her off.

"You've always been like our leader, Mike, so it's only right for you to be theirs too. You know your stuff." Will told him.

"Huh." Mike looked around at them.

"Anyone who *disagrees*, can get the *fuck* out of here." El said, walking over and standing next to her boyfriend, crossing her arms with a *hmpf*.

No one budged.

"Mike may be the leader, but El is Queen and *shall not be crossed*."

Mike snickered at his friend, and grinned at the way his girlfriend flipped her hair over her shoulder with a sly smile.

"For once, Dustin makes a *great* point."

20. NOT AN UPDATE

So... It's been a lil over three months since the last update. I do apologize!

However, there will no longer be any story updates to this, as, like I did with Home, I will be rewriting the series. I've been trying to write a new chapter, but it's just not working, so I decided to go back and read and oh. my. God.

I cringed SO HARD WTH like I still love it and all but there's so many plot holes and doesn't really make sense, therefore, I'm gonna rewrite it. It may or may not have a new name. If it does, I'll be sure to update here and tell you guys the name.

Don't worry those of you who have characters, you will still be in the story! It will honestly be fairly different from the original Eloquent Abilities and Phenomenal Mutiny.

I'm sorry for the long wait, and even longer wait to come, but I haven't given up on my stories! Just being an actual adult is more difficult than one might think, and I have a normal, 9-5 job, Mon-Fri now so I don't get a lot of time to write. And if you know me, you know that I wrote the most at like 3 AM and 4 AM, and I can no longer do that or I will hate myself.

Again, once the new story is posted (whenever it may be) I'll let you guys know here :)

Love you guys! I hope you don't hate me!